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CHRIST THE SPIRIT:

BEING AN

ATTEMPT TO STATE THE

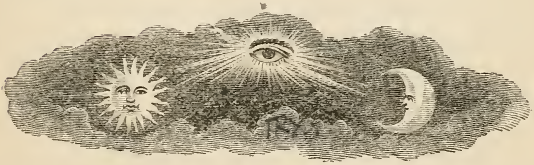
PRIMITIVE VIEW OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the Flesh profiteth nothing.
JOHN vi. 63.
The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.
2 COR. iii. 6.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"REMARKS ON ALCHEMY AND THE ALCHEMISTS;" AND "SWEDENBORG
A HERMETIC PHILOSOPHER."

PART SECOND.



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The eye by long use comes to see even in the darkest corner; and there is no subject so obscure, but we may discern some glimpse of truth by long poring on it. Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. Certainly where it is the chief passion, it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardor in the early time of life, active perhaps to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge, must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as first fruits, at the altar of Truth.

(*From a Hermetic Volume.*)

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CHRIST THE SPIRIT.

PART SECOND.

SECTION I.

THE author of the work entitled CHRIST the SPIRIT thinks proper to add a SECOND PART to that work, in order to show the application of his hypothesis in a more detailed interpretation of one of the gospels. He selects for this purpose the gospel according to John, as critical writers usually consider this by itself, the three first gospels being generally classed together under the designation of the Synoptics.

The gospel of John is manifestly written with more unity of design than either of the first three gospels; indeed, it is perfect as a work of art, independently of all question about its character as a supernatural product of the Holy Spirit.

In comparison with this wonderful work, the gospels by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, seem irregular and fragmentary in their construction. They appear to be more or less obscured by traditional matter from unknown sources, indicating imperfect knowledge and vague opinions in the writers; and the materials they furnish can never be perfectly harmonized: but, from the point of view taken in this work, this presents no serious embarrassment.

In the gospel of John, the author recognizes a perfect work of art, and he proposes in the following pages to disclose its import.

The author has no hesitation in speaking of his view as a theory. Indeed, he distinctly proposes it as such, for the study of others; for, although satisfied himself of the correctness of the position he has taken, he has no disposition to offer it to others except as a study; and he would not even do this, if he had not a positive conviction that piety, as a religious affection or principle, is more secure and free under the closest intellectual inquiry into the historical and critical questions connected with the origin of the gospels, than it can be under any system of accommodation by which traditions, or traditional interpretations of ancient writings, are made to hold a questionable place in public opinion.

So far as piety may depend upon the results of historical and critical inquiries, or upon questions coming within their sphere, it must share in whatever uncertainty a consciously unexercised reason may leave around such questions. If religious feeling depends at all upon intellectual results, then we are called upon to secure those results from assault; but this cannot be done by waiving the exercise of reason. The suppositition of such a dependence of piety upon the exercise of reason would warn us to accept as final only such results as can be honestly but distinctly brought before the bar of reason, and fortified by reason itself. On the other hand, if piety is absolutely independent of the reason, the exercise of the latter can never prejudice the former.

But in making declarations like these, it is proper to explain that all reasoning supposes some fact, or some postulate, which is not established by reasoning itself, but which is the ground of all reasoning. The principle of reasoning may be called reason itself, just as the principle of loving may be called love; but man neither reasons nor loves the principle into being in either case. Hence the Being of God is not an object of proof by reasoning, since all reasoning presupposes the Being of God. It is not the Being, but the nature of God, that men dispute about.

Now, there is one postulate which is common to both religion and philosophy, and should be properly conceived before any mere reasoning can be valid for either philosophy or religion. We are told by Christ himself, Luke x. 42, that "but one thing is necessary." If the student errs in his primary conception of this one postulate, whatever system he may build will be apt to stand upon a sandy foundation; and then we are already told what the result will be.

This point being distinctly understood, it may be stated, without reserve, that a conscientious exercise of our faculties in speculative inquiries is, itself, a religious exercise; and no results from such a study or exercise, pursued as premised in a religious spirit, can disturb the peace or the joy of genuine religion: on the contrary, they must share in it. To suppose otherwise is to depreciate the importance and the power of the religious sensibility, by making it a subordinate principle, subject to what may be called profane truth, but still that which is truth, nevertheless, and must for that reason maintain its place in the intellect, whatever tradition may say to the contrary.

If, under such circumstances, an opposition between science and religion be deemed a necessary result, then the unity of the soul must be denied, and all efforts to establish its harmony would necessarily be fruitless.

We had better assume and act upon the principle, that whatever is true for the reason, ought not to be out of harmony with the heart; it being understood that the reason is conscientiously exercised. Whoever fails in this, is responsible at the bar of his own conscience, and cannot transfer his accountability to others. The soul that sinneth, shall bear its own iniquity. Ezek. xviii. 20.

This point being thus settled in the mind of the author, he feels no necessity for imposing any restriction upon his inquiries except that of pursuing them with fidelity.

Before proceeding to the further task he has proposed for himself, it may be well to re-state briefly the theory upon which he has ventured to enter the field of theological inquiry.

After no little reading and reflection, for the purpose of coming to some understanding with himself on the subject of the gospels, their history and purpose,—a literal reading of which his reason rejected,—the author "fell upon" the remarkable account of the society of Essenes, or Therapeutists, among the Jews, in the works of Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, contemporary with the period assigned as the advent of Christ. He saw the likeness, which others had pointed out, between the doctrines of the Essenes and those of the gospels, and was most particularly struck with the statement, that in the interpretation of the Hebrew sacred writings the Essenes regarded "*the whole of the law*" as a LIVING CREATURE; the mere letter, or its literal sense, answering to the body, while a mysterious internal sense answered to the soul. He saw that the Essene society was a brotherhood, having a secret, which the members were solemnly sworn not to divulge; and that they were even sworn *not to write of their secret except in allegory or symbolism;* while it was stated that they actually had books among themselves which served as models of allegorical interpretation.

In the statement that the Law was regarded as a living creature, it was of course impossible not to see that MAN must have been referred to as that living creature.

At length the idea arose distinctly, that, as the parable of the Prodigal Son conveyed a beautiful teaching, without pretending to an historical basis or verity, it was possible that the entire gospels might be parabolical, and might be portions of the identical books which the Essenes are said to have had, written for their use, instruction, and edification, in such a style as not to expose their secret to the uninitiated, while verbal explanations in their private assemblies might have made them readily understood to the members of the society.

The author found that Eusebius, in the fourth century, had distinctly given the opinion that the Christian gospels and epistles *were some of the secret books* of the Essene brotherhood; although the ecclesiastical historian endeavored to prove that the Essenes were the early Christians under another name, as though their rise had been subsequent to the advent of Christ. But this explanation was soon seen to be altogether untenable; and it then became apparent, that, instead of the Essenes having sprung from the Christians, the Christians on the contrary had their origin among the Essenes.

Thus, one step leading to another, the author began to observe the structure of the gospels, under the influence of these rising suspicions, and to notice many passages which seemed to point out the Essenes as their authors. He saw the caution not to give the children's bread to the dogs, and not to throw pearls before swine. He noticed the passages declaring that Christ spake to the people only in parables, while it is stated, that he explained all things openly to the disciples.

It was not long before he saw that by bread was to be understood DOCTRINE—the doctrine of the Essenes being the children's bread; while PEARLS, again, was a figurative word for truths—divine truths, hidden in the symbolical letter, as being too "holy" for the profane.

The author's attention fell upon a variety of double expressions, which might easily be applied to the Scripture in its double character as a living creature, such as water and spirit, bread and wine, loaves and fishes, &c.; and, upon considering the language setting forth the necessity of eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking his blood, the question involuntarily arose—Can the Law be referred to in this language, in its letter and spirit, personified in CHRIST as the Son of Man and the Son of GOD?

It did not escape observation, and great importance was attached to the fact, that in numerous places of Scripture, particularly in the Psalms, and especially in the 119th Psalm, as also in the parable of the Sower in Mark, the Law is called the Word, meaning the Word of GOD.—And why might not this be the very Word of John, as used in a mysterious writing? Slowly, and after much careful and patient study, the answer to these questions assumed an affirmative form; and the author then began to read the gospels anew from this point of view.

The general result is disclosed in the preceding part of this work.

Without going particularly into a discussion as to the personality of CHRIST, it has been assumed that, for the purposes of the gospel writers, the person was lost in the personification.

The personality of Jesus is not denied; but it is assumed that, for the object which the gospel writers had in view, whatever might have been his personal history, Jesus Christ, as exhibited in the gospels, is the personification of the Hebrew sacred writings, as seen principally in the writings of Moses.

As the Law was divine in the estimation of the Jews, its representative appropriately appears in a supernatural character; and yet with such variations as may readily be referred to the genius of different writers exhibiting a common doctrine, with the freedom of expressing it enigmatically—only two of the gospel writers relating particularly the supernatural birth of Jesus.

At this point the harmony, or the want of it, in the gospels, as external histories, became unimportant; while the doctrine itself rose proportionately in both beauty and importance.

It was impossible to resist the conclusions to which the author was led. He did not go in search of them. They came to him. He gave them welcome indeed, for they seemed to promise a solution of some of the most wonderful problems that have ever engaged the intellect and the affections of man.

The author finally came to see the question substantially in the following manner:—

The Hebrew Sacred Law was to the Jews a body of religion and of philosophy. It was to them not only the Truth, but the Truth of God, and the rule of both faith and practice. The Law was received and understood literally by all of the Jews except one sect, that of the Essenes, a secret society, as already stated.

By the Essenes the Law was considered as twofold, or, as having a body and a soul. These were symbolized in various ways; as, by water and wine (John ii. 9); by water and spirit (John iii. 5); by loaves and fishes (Matt. xiv. 17); by flesh and blood (John vi. 53); by bread and wine (Mark xiv. 22, 23); as also by the water of Jacob's well, and living water (John iv. 10, 12); and even by the *two* called the friend and the bridegroom (John iii. 29); and by the servant and his master (John xiii. 16).

In these double expressions, one signifies the letter of the Law, and the other its internal sense or living truth.

Thus, the Tabernacle, regarded as an external or visible building, is the *flesh*, while it signifies or symbolizes a spiritual building, not made with hands.

As the letter is supposed to precede the understanding of it by the phenomenal man, it is personified in John the Baptist, who is thus the forerunner of Christ the Spirit. John baptizes in water, this being the symbol of the letter; and he declares, speaking in the name of the letter, that he is not worthy to unloose the shoe's latchet of him who represents the Spirit; for relatively to the Baptist, Christ represents the Spirit.

Although the Baptist figures the letter, Christ represents both the letter and the Spirit. He often speaks as the Law. But in some places he speaks as the letter, using the very language of the Baptist, as we shall show; and then again, and this most frequently, he speaks as the Spirit or internal sense of the Law, in which character he speaks "as one having authority;" for in many ways it is shown that the Spirit is unspeakably more important than the letter. It is the "master" of the letter, the letter being the "servant."

We have just seen how the Baptist humiliates himself before the Spirit; and this is confirmed by Christ himself where, in Matthew xi. 11, he declares, that the least in the kingdom of heaven—Christ himself, as the Spirit of Truth, being heaven—is greater than the greatest of woman born; the letter being thus characterized as a product on the nature or feminine side of life, the Spirit being said to be from above.

Where Christ says, My Father is greater than I, he speaks as the letter; but he speaks with the authority of the Spirit when he declares, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God (Luke xiv. 15); for this blessing is pronounced upon those who live in the Spirit of Truth, this being *bread* in the Kingdom of God; for God is truth.

In the character of the Spirit Christ exhibits the more advanced state of the Jews, or of some of them, the most spiritual and cultivated among them. Thus, he excuses some things in the very Law he represents, by saying that it was accommodated to the "hardness of the hearts" of those to whom it was addressed (Mark x. 5). He revises some portions of the Law, and even does away with some of its barbarous features.

This exhibits no contradiction. It only shows that the writers of the gospels entered fully into the spirit of the Law, and were in a position to expound it in reference to the state of the world, and were thence enabled to announce as of paramount authority, what is called a new commandment, That ye love one another, John xiii. 34; for this is the Spirit of the old commandment, as expounded by St. Paul, who calls it charity.

If it be said that both the Old and the New Law, in all their details, are absolutely supernatural, to such an extent as to partake of the unchangeable nature of the Deity, it might then be difficult to explain the apparent diversity in the external teaching; one requiring an eye for an eye, the other teaching forgiveness of enemies. If, again, it be said that the new commandment, That ye love one another, is supernatural in a sense different in kind from that in which the older Law originated—this would be equivalent to a denial of the divine origin of the old Law; it would destroy the harmony of the Old and the New Testaments: whereas, when the two are contemplated in reference to the general history of the world as a portion and not the whole of GOD'S providence, they may be considered as standing in the relation to each other of youth and manhood, and the harmony is preserved.

If it be said that the New Testament exhibits such a teaching as never came from man,—that Christ spake as never man spake,—the answer may come from several considerations.

In the first place, whatever teaching is found in the New Testament exists, for us, as a writing; and no being in existence writes books but man. In the next place, the doctrine of the forgiveness of enemies, which makes so marked a feature in the New Testament, was distinctly taught by Plato. Finally, we may consider the language attributing superhuman wisdom to the teaching of Christ, as simply a mode of expressing an exalted opinion of that teaching, which will be seen in the end to be applicable to the Law, the proper subject of the gospel—the object being to teach the initiates of a secret society its divine character.

The language in the gospel setting forth the supernatural character of Christ's teaching, expresses in fact a foregone conclusion in relation to the Law, which was regarded as divine [the Word of God]; though this will appear more plainly as we proceed in the interpretation of the gospel of John.

To understand the application of the language in question it is necessary to look into the Law as enclosing a mysterious internal sense, which has its counterpart or verification in the spiritual nature of man. When the Law is *heard*—that is, when the Law is *understood* in its internal sense—it is a justifiable hyperbole to characterize it as if it spake as man never spake; though this must be understood only as expressing an exalted opinion of the wisdom of the Law.

This internal sense was apprehended by the Essenes, and they were thence able to exhibit it in the life of Christ, that life being held up by them as a mode of teaching the initiates of their society.

As Christ represents the Law, so also he represents his mother, the Church, which was intimately connected with the Law; yet he is made, as the Spirit of Truth, to cleanse the external Church, by driving out the money-changers, or mercenary spirit of the Church—this being the internal sense of the conduct attributed to Christ in Matt. xxi., Mark xi., Luke xix., and John ii. The teaching is the same in all four of the gospels, though not introduced by the evangelists in the same historical order, or with the same external connections, because the importance of the teaching lies in the doctrine, and not in the history.

In thus alluding to the Church as the mother of Christ, let it be understood, once for all, that the Church is taken in the sense of St. Paul, as the Jerusalem which is above and the mother of us all (Gal. iv. 26).

The act of Jesus in driving the money-changers out of the temple, is recorded in the 2d chapter of John, as among the earliest acts attributed to Jesus; but in Matthew it appears, in the 21st chapter, imputed to a much later period of his life. This is only important from an artistic point of view. In John, the first act of the Spirit of Truth is to turn the letter into spirit. This is symbolized by the marriage scene, called the "beginning" miracle by Christ at Cana of Galilee. The second act, as recorded by

John, being (no less appropriately, from an artistic point of view) the cleansing or purifying of the Church, represented by the scene of "whipping" out of the temple the sellers of doves, &c.

It is not the wish of the author to be dogmatic in reference to the subject he is treating; but he feels called upon, by the highest considerations, to deal candidly with it, and with his reader. He therefore expresses the opinion that at no time in the history of the world has there been any supernatural interference with the course of development, either in the natural or the spiritual world, the providence of GOD being as unchangeable as his nature.

It is well known that the most advanced students of geology have accepted the position of Lyell, Buckland, and others, and are pursuing their investigations under the distinct confession that the Bible was not designed to teach science, and that its language is often to be understood by receiving it as accommodated to the ignorance of the world. Hence the study of geology is pursued under the acknowledgment of perpetually acting causes, excluding all notion of a preternatural disturbance of those causes. In like manner, the author does not recognize a disturbance in the operation of moral causes affecting the development of the nature of man. He therefore finds no serious difficulty in attributing the gospels to Hellenistic Jews at Alexandria—men acquainted with the writings of Plato, who recognized a common aim in the teachings of the

Greek philosopher and in the divine writings of Moses and the Prophets, both being directed to the purification and perfection of the soul of man. As Jews, they naturally gave the priority to their sacred Law; but by means of symbolical histories they have illustrated the spirit of the Law, wonderfully in harmony with the teachings of Plato, but without any direct reference to Plato, because the Spirit of Truth is independent of all personal authority, as Plato himself teaches no less than the gospels. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

We may now recognize the various characters in which CHRIST appears in the gospel, it being understood that, for the purposes of the gospel writers, he is not a person, but a representative character, representing a person nevertheless. As an historical person, he brought to light the grace and truth of the Law which was given to Moses (John i. 17). Upon this fact he became the representative of the Law which he had explained. In symbolism, he is the Hebrew Sacred Law. As its Spirit, he is the Father of the Law, which, as a letter or writing, is the Son of Man. As the Spirit of Truth in which the Law was conceived, he is the Son of GOD. As the Spirit again, proceeding from the Church, the invisible Church being immaculate, he is the Son of the Virgin-Mother; the mother being of the same nature with her Son, who, in another relation, is the bridegroom of the Church, whose Son is the same Spirit again.

It must be understood that we are speaking here of the Scriptures, and are not attempting to explain universal nature.

The Law is the basis of the subsequent Scriptures; and is continually appealed to in all of the later writings. It is embraced in the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses, though the book of Joshua is intimately connected with it. Some of the Jews received the Pentateuch only as of divine authority.

It will be said that the Law, being prophetic, was necessarily referred to in the later writings, especially in the gospels, because of the fulfilment of the prophecies. But this reference is only apparent, and was assumed by the gospel writers merely to exhibit, through Christ, the idea of the Law as the Divine Word, in order to teach its divine character. The Law of Moses was regarded as the Word that "endureth forever." The historical Christ was not the fulfilment of prophecy: he was set forward in the gospels to teach the eternal spirit of the Law, by an impersonation of it.

It is difficult for a modern Christian, with all his reverence for the Bible, to conceive of the awe with which the ancient Jew contemplated the Law. It was to him the Word of God, as if God spake audibly in it. It stood before him in the place of God, as Moses stood to Aaron; and, under the name of the Lord, was regarded as a living power executing its own promises and threatenings.

There are passages in the New Testament immediately at hand that would be decisive in proof of the position here taken, if a question of this magnitude could be disposed of by a few Scripture texts.

No language can be more clear or free from ambiguity than that in the 10th chapter of Luke, where the lawyer asks the question, verse 25, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Verse 26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? V. 27. And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself (Vide Deut. vi. 4, 5, and Levit. xix. 18). V. 28. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

In this answer, as recorded by Luke, Christ says nothing of himself at all. The lawyer is not told to love or follow him, but to obey the Law in those cardinal particulars on which "hang the Law and the Prophets," as the great teacher elsewhere declares.

If the lawyer had addressed his question to Moses himself, he would have been told to obey the Law,—as we find it written in Leviticus xviii. 4, 5. Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.

Thus the Law personified says: Because I live, ye shall live also (John xiv. 19); that is, as expressed elsewhere, He that eateth me, he shall live by me (John vi. 57). To *eat* CHRIST being a figurative expression for appropriating the Law by living according to the Law.

CHRIST, speaking in the name of the Law he represented, again and again sets forth obedience as necessary to life, eternal life, or, as it is sometimes called, everlasting life—and this was the object of the question by the lawyer.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word [meaning the word of the Law,] and believeth on him that sent me [the spirit of the Law, or the LORD], hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death to life (John v. 24).

We shall have occasion to refer to this passage again, for it furnishes a sufficient key to all of the miracles in the gospels, representing the raising of the dead; for those miracles are nothing but symbolical or figurative modes of teaching the power of the Law to give life to those who "follow" the Law, or "do" what the Law requires. This "Life" is a life of TRUTH, as opposed to a life of *falsehood*, which is death—death to the spirit, or to man in respect to the spirit.

It is the Law personified as speaking in John xii. 46, 50: I am the light of the world, that whosoever believeth on me [the Law] should not abide in darkness. * * I have not spoken of myself; but the

Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment [this is the Law]. And I know that his commandment [that is, obedience to it] is everlasting life.

The new commandment (John xiii. 34), That ye love one another, is, in verse 35, declared to be the evidence of discipleship; because love, called charity by St. Paul, is the end or object of the Law. The difference between obedience to the Law, and Love, in the new commandment, is precisely that between the Letter and the Spirit, love being the spirit of the letter. These two are personified, in the gospel of John, by the Baptist and CHRIST respectively. But as the letter and its spirit are in harmony, CHRIST represents both.

As immediate examples wherein CHRIST speaks in the double character of letter and spirit, we have referred in Section III. of the preceding Part to the declaration to Nicodemus, that he must be born of water and the Spirit; meaning that he must understand the Scriptures in both their letter and spirit—their outward and inward sense. Again, CHRIST declares the necessity of eating the flesh of the Son of Man, and of drinking his blood;—this declaration having the same meaning as that to Nicodemus. The curing of the blind man by clay, made of spittle and earth, has the same sense; the blind man being blind in understanding, which blindness the Law, understood in its letter and spirit, is supposed to cure. Loaves and fishes mean doctrine again; the dead letter (or flesh) and the living truth (or blood); and doctrine may be distributed to thousands without loss or diminution. CHRIST, seen with Moses and Elias, means that the Law and the Prophets express a common truth, the Divine Truth, the Holy One of Israel.

All of the miracles recorded in the gospels are to be interpreted as symbolic parables. They exist for us in writing only, and no testimony can ever establish their verity as history. If a so-called miracle could be proved as a verity, it would be regarded among scientific men, not as a miracle, but as a fact in nature; and not the less so though no natural explanation of it should be at hand.

The miracles all need interpretation as so many parables, illustrating the power and grace of the sacred Law in working wonders in the souls of those who had faith in the Law; for, without faith, CHRIST could do no "mighty works" (Matt. xiii. 58), just as, in this age, the Bible, though a sacred volume, a book of truth to the believing soul, is, in a measure, powerless over those who have no faith in it. Bible truth is not the less real because of the want of faith; but that it is less operative, must be confessed by all observers of its influence in the world.

SECTION II.

In order to show the prominence of the Law in the estimation of the Jews, as exhibited in the later writings, it may be well to cite a few passages from those writings. They may serve to prepare the reader for the view taken in this work, that the gospels are symbolical interpretations of the Law.

The Hebrew sacred Law is called the Law of God, and was regarded as the Divine Word. It is called also the Law of the Lord, the Lord being the spirit in which the Law originated. It is referred to as the commandments, the judgments, the precepts, the testimonies, and the way or ways of the Lord. It is called the treasures of wisdom and the fountain of life. It is in some places personified as Wisdom speaking, especially in the Proverbs. It is sometimes referred to simply as the Law, or as the commandments, without the addition *of the Lord*, this being understood; and it is called the covenant, referring to the promises annexed to the commandments upon condition of obedience to them.

Above all, in order to understand the gospel according to John, it is necessary to bear in mind that the Law was sometimes called the Word of God, and not unfrequently simply the Word—as in the parable of the Sower in Mark, and in the first verse of the gospel under consideration, where the Word is personified. It is called the Word or *thy* Word (the Word of the Lord, its Spirit) in some twenty verses or more of the 119th Psalm, and in many other places of Scripture.

It is important to notice the various expressions, in the later writings, referring to the Law, and to understand that the Law of Moses is the object of the references. Occasionally we meet with the expression, Moses and the Prophets; but it will be seen, that the prophets themselves appeal to the Law and stand upon it. We shall see that the only thing that intervened in the mind of the Jew between himself and the Infinite, was the Law; and this was regarded as the Word of God, given directly to Moses for the children of Israel.

In the mind of the Jew the Law was scarcely distinguished from God who gave it, the only intervening idea that can be discovered being called the Lord, referred, by the more intelligent, to the Spirit of the Law; and yet this was conceived as the eternal Word in God, and one with God, as expressed in the gospel of John.

The knowledge of God, and the knowledge of the Lord, in reality mean but one thing; and that is, the knowledge of the Law in its Spirit. The secret of the

Lord is the secret of the Law; and this is called the knowledge of God, and is said to be with them that fear him, because the fear of God and the fear of the Law—its judgments, testimonies, &c.—were one and the same. This fear was manifested in that obedience to the Law which produced in its followers the *effects* of the Law, the effects then becoming the witness of the truth of the Law. Those effects on life provided or furnished that experimental knowledge, which, even in our time, is called the witness of the Spirit. This witness of the Spirit is everywhere in Scripture declared to be the fruit of obedience.

The secret of the Lord, an expression frequently used in Scripture, is a spiritual knowledge of the truth of the Law. This truth, when referred to a living power expressed in the letter of the Law, is the Holy One of Israel.

The knowledge of it can be obtained but by one of two ways: by a life of holiness; or, by obedience to the Law, as the "way" to a *life* of holiness—obedience being the baptism of water, the fruit being a baptism of the spirit.

The order of ideas or conceptions, as they stood in the minds of the Jews, may perhaps be thus stated: God is the Ineffable One, the I Am, whose name is incommunicable. With the Jews, as among the Hindoos, the true name of God was not to be audibly pronounced. Yet he is referred to under different names, as in Exodus vi. 3. Without presuming to explain this we may be quite certain, that the Ineffable One, conceived as expressing his will in the Law, is the LORD referred to in the language: Blessed is he whose GOD is the LORD.

GOD, as the LORD, and as the Holy One of Israel, is the LORD of the New Testament; and he is the Father of the written Law. The Law is then the Son, the Son of GOD as to its Spirit, and the Son of Man as a writing. Hence the Law, personified in CHRIST, is both the Son of GOD and the Son of Man. CHRIST, representing the Law, speaks sometimes in one character and sometimes in the other; and even speaks as if from one character to the other; which is perfectly proper only from the point of view that the gospel is a symbolical drama.

As the Law, CHRIST gives his hearers the simple process by which the truth, that is, the divinity of the Law, was to be discovered, in these words, If any man will do his will [that is, if any man will obey the Law], he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD, or whether I speak of myself (John vii. 17). For a doctrine to be of GOD, means that it must be true, for GOD is truth.

That CHRIST, in the passage just recited from John, refers to the Law will become apparent as we proceed.

To show the importance of the Law in the estimation of the Jews, we can hardly go amiss in opening the sacred volume: thus, in the 2d chapter I. Kings, David addresses Solomon when about to ascend the throne:

1. Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

2. I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man;

3. And keep the charge of the LORD thy GOD, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his testimonies, *as it is written in the Law of Moses*, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself.

The wisdom for which Solomon prayed was the wisdom of the Law, or its Spirit, called the Spirit of wisdom—the Law being the treasures of wisdom.

In Ecclesiastes we may observe the same teaching. Ecclesiastes should be considered as a whole, its separate statements not expressing definitive results, but stages of an inquiry. The subject of inquiry is proposed in the third verse of the second chapter, the object being to discover "What was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under heaven all the days of their life." The successive portions of the inquiry through several chapters exhibit the preacher's observations and reflections upon life, not as results, but, as already stated, as stages or steps of an inquiry. The result is not disclosed until, in the last chapter, verse 13, where we read, Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear GOD and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

This conclusion is but a repetition of what we find in the commandments themselves. To fear GOD, is so to love GOD as to fear to disobey him. Therefore the conclusion of the preacher is but a reiteration of Deut. xi. 1, Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway.

Obedience to the Law was the sole virtue of a Jew.

This obedience is sometimes expressed in its results, as in Micah vi. 8: What doth the LORD [that is, what doth the Law] require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD—GOD being the invisible Spirit, the LORD of the Law.

In the gospel, the end of the Law and the Prophets is summed up in love to GOD and one's neighbor; though St. Paul, in one place, defines it as love of the neighbor (Rom. xiii. 8, 10), because such a love expresses the righteousness, which St. Paul also calls the end, that is, the object of the Law; or, in the language of Micah, that which the LORD requires of us.

The Law is the key-note of the Psalms, and is referred to in all imaginable ways.

We are so familiar with the opening verses of the Psalms, that we seldom stop to reflect upon their import as referring to the Law of Moses.

1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

The Law of the LORD is the Law of Moses; and this is the Word, personified in John. The Jews knew no other law, and no other Word of GOD. This was their guide in life: it was both their religion and their philosophy. It was conceived as having proceeded so immediately from GOD, that the Law of the LORD and the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, were scarcely distinguishable in their eyes. What the Law said, the LORD said, or was supposed to have said.

When the LORD is spoken of apart from the Law, the Spirit of the Law is meant, the Law having been divinely given or divinely sanctioned. These two are one, or in harmony, as set forth in the gospel in the words, I and my Father are one—this language expressing the harmony of the Law with the Spirit of Truth in which the Law originated, the Law being personified in CHRIST, according to the hypothesis.

The Psalms are full of references to the Law, varied in the forms of expression as far as the power of language will admit. The 119th Psalm is one of the longest in the collection, every verse of which is brief; and almost every verse contains a reference to the Law in such terms as to show that the Psalmist neither saw nor wished to see any other guide in life than the Law, always meaning the Law as given by Moses. It is called the Word or Thy Word; and it is called the Law, the Law of GOD, the Law of the LORD, the commandments, the statutes, the judgments, the precepts: it is referred to as the way or the ways of the LORD: it is the Word, according to which " salvation" is secured: it "quickens and comforts in affliction," and is "better than thousands of gold and silver," &c.

In order to bring the attention more immediately upon the point suggested, a few verses of the 119th Psalm are here recited in consecutive order.

1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD:—the Law of the LORD being, as we have said, the Law given by Moses, the spirit, or internal sense of which, is the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart:—here the testimonies are the testimonies of the Law which proceeded from the LORD.

3. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways:—that is, they obey the Law.

4. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently:—that is, the precepts of the Law.

5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes:—that is, the statutes of the Law.

6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments:—that is, the commandments of the Law.

7. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments:—these are the covenanted judgments of the Law; promises of good to the obedient, but threatenings of every sort of evil and mischief to the disobedient.

8. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

9. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy word:—this is the word of the Law; the Word which, conceived in its Spirit, is the subject of the opening verses of John's gospel. As a writing, it is mystically said to have been made flesh. But the Spirit of the writing is the blood of the flesh, and this is the Lord personified in Christ.

10. With my whole heart have I sought thee [the Spirit of the Law, the Lord]: O let me not wander from thy commandments:—that is, the commandments of the Law.

11. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

To sin against God was to disobey the Law; and all evil was regarded as a consequence of such disobedience. Evil was looked upon as a penalty inflicted by the judgment of God for some disobedience of the Law. Hence, in all afflictions, the first thought of a Jew was to return to the Law, some portion of which he was sure he had neglected, even when unable to remember any particular requirement so neglected.

The 119th Psalm extends to one hundred and seventy-six verses. The few recited above may be taken as a fair specimen of the whole; and if, in reading this Psalm, we call the *Law* of Moses the Word, whenever its synonyms occur, we shall see the importance of that Word which (verse 105) was to the

Psalmist a lamp to his feet, and a light to his path: this being said of the Law of Moses. For the commandment is a lamp, and the Law is light (Prov. vi. 23).

The perpetual appeal to the Law, throughout the Psalms, is wonderful in its variety and most affecting in its simplicity. There is nothing like it in modern Christian literature; and when the Spirit of it is apprehended, and the relation of the Psalmist to the Law is understood, there will be but little difficulty in perceiving that the gospels are but a varied form of the same teaching.

The Psalmist saw the Law as divine. In the 2d Psalm he personifies it as the "decree," and represents its Spirit as speaking of itself: The LORD hath said unto me [that is, the Spirit of the Law hath said unto the Law]: Thou art my son: this day have I begotten thee:—and then, as if addressing its followers, we read: Kiss the son, lest he be angry, &c.

The gospel merely repeats in another form what we read in the Psalm: This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased (Matt. iii. 17). The Law is the Son. To kiss the Son means to make friends with the Law by obedience to it, for this was to obey the LORD.

The 1st verse of the 110th Psalm is a bold double personification, such as could only have come from an Eastern poet, to whom the Law was not merely a reality, but a living reality. The poet represents the Spirit of the Law as addressing the Law itself, affirming its powers: The LORD said unto my LORD [that is, the Spirit of the Law said unto the Law], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

To be at enmity with the Law was to be at enmity with God, whose Spirit was in the Law; thus, as we read in John, I am not alone, but I and my Father:—that is, the Father is with the Law to enforce obedience to it, and will "scatter its enemies," &c.

In a similar sense Christ says: He that believeth on me believeth not on me, but on him that sent me (John xii. 44):—meaning that the Law and the Spirit of the Law are in such a sense one, that to believe in the Law is to believe in God. This is beautifully expressed in Mark, where a child, as innocence, is held up as a symbol of the Spirit of the Law, and then we read: Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me, and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me (Mark ix. 37).

This is no other than a mode of symbolical teaching, addressed to a secret society, whose members recognized innocence, figured by childhood, as one of the graces the Law was intended to secure.

Wisdom may be considered as the Spirit of Truth, or as a fruit of it, according to the manner in which it is spoken of in various places in Scripture. In some passages it is personified as speaking in the first person, as in Proverbs; but still, its connection with the Law and dependence upon it is everywhere recognized.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my *commandments* with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart unto understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God (Prov. ii. 1–5).

The Spirit of Truth, or of the Law, is here personified and set forward to persuade us to that obedience of the *commandments* (or the Law), which we everywhere see set forth in Scripture as the way to the knowledge of God. This knowledge is sometimes called the knowledge of the Lord, and sometimes the knowledge of the Father—the Father of the written Word; the written Word being the Son of Man as a writing, but the Son of God as having proceeded forth from God. In John, it is called (him) who was "sent" by the Father; while in Matthew the Law is called the message or messenger from God, as personified in the Baptist.

In the prophecies, likewise, the Law is the mystical centre of the teaching. It is usually personified as the Lord, and is referred to in all imaginable ways. It is endowed with human passions and attributes, and described as angry with the wicked every day—the wicked being those who had "cast away the Law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word [the Law] of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. v. 24). This language is a natural outgrowth of the Law itself, which promises blessings upon the obedient, but denounces horrible curses upon the disobedient.

The "anger" of God is a metaphorical expression for the evil consequences which follow a departure from the Law. The Lord bringing destruction upon his enemies, is the Law personified as personally inflicting the miseries which follow in the path of those whose "feet run to do evil."

The Spirit of the Law, the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, is described as innocence and truth. It is figured by a lamb, and by a dove, and also by a child—by a *little* child of wonderful powers, teaching the soul more mysteries than all the externally acquired learning in the world, leading it to declare: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent [the worldly wise and prudent], and hast revealed them unto babes [meaning the innocent]. In its reliance upon the truth it exclaims: Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation (Isa. xii. 2). This reliance, as we see by verse 6, is upon the Holy One of Israel. This is the Spirit of the Law, the Spirit of Truth; and this is personified in Christ.

The frequent reference to the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, and especially the Canaanites, in Scriptural writings, must be generally understood figuratively. They usually represent principles in man opposed to the Spirit of Truth. This Spirit is the Holy

One of Israel; and this is the LORD—the LORD "which brought (Israel) out of the land of Egypt."

To be brought out of Egypt, is to be brought out of error, figured by Egypt, into the light of truth, figured by the Holy Land. In the 143d Psalm this land is called "the land of uprightness."

The passage from darkness to light, error to truth, ignorance to knowledge, is often spoken of in Scripture as a "going over,"—a going over of the natural to the spiritual man,—a *passing over* from a state of nature to a state of grace; and this was celebrated in ancient times by a feast—no other than the feast of the Passover.

The same spiritual phenomenon is figured by the Cross; it is a crossing over from the world of sense to the world of spirit. This was symbolized in the ancient astronomical systems, by the passage of the sun through the vernal equinox, when a cold and bleak winter was exchanged for a mild and genial spring and summer; or it was seen figured at an earlier period as the birth of a year, when the Lord of day and of night passed his extreme southern declination and began to rise again into the northern hemisphere. This formerly took place in December; but the period is variable owing to the precession of the equinoxes. The allusion to the sun is, however, a mere figure. Those who have seen in such allusions nothing but a mere method of teaching astronomy, are most surely mistaken, and have utterly missed the secret they sought to discover.

There are many remarkable passages in the apocryphal writings showing the exalted character of the Law, as it stood in the mind of the Jew, which, though not recognized by Protestants as canonical, because not found in the Hebrew, may nevertheless be profitably consulted by those who desire to see how the Law was estimated by the Jews.

In the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, the Law is personified as *Wisdom*, and set forward as speaking thus:

1. Wisdom shall praise herself, and shall glory in the midst of her people.

2. In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth, and triumph before his power.

Here we are told expressly of the personified character of the speaker, which prepares us for interpreting what is said. In the gospel we are not thus prepared, and yet Christ is the personification of the same Spirit, here exhibited as speaking in the name of Wisdom, and which we shall soon see is the wisdom of the Law given by Moses. Wisdom now speaks:

Verse 3. I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a cloud.

4. I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar.

Here, without doubt, we have allusions to Moses, as he went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount (Ex. xxiv. 15).

Verse 5. I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, and walked in the bottom of the deep.

6. In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession.

7. With all these I sought rest; and in whose inheritance shall I abide?

The declaration that Wisdom had got a "possession" in every nation, means that every people and every nation has some expression of the Law, though of all such expressions the Hebrew written Law was the greatest, as we may see in the 11th chapter of Matthew. Thus far, Wisdom seems to speak as it is conceived in the Spirit, prior to its appearing in visible form. But the next few verses point to the written Law, as appearing among the Israelites, and at Jerusalem.

Verse 8. So the Creator of all things gave me a *commandment*, and he that made me caused my tabernacle to rest, and said, Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel.

This verse is remarkable as containing a portion of the language used in John xii. 49. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, gave me a *commandment*, what I should say, and what I should speak. This *commandment* is the Law, the Word, the Word of GOD: but we must constantly keep in mind that the Law is twofold, or was so regarded by the Essenes.

Verse 9. He created me from the beginning, before the world, and I shall never fail.

This verse may remind us of what John says of the Word; and of the declaration by CHRIST—Before Abraham was, I AM. The Law, the Word, in its spirit is eternal; in expression, temporal: in spirit, it is compared to fire; in writing, to water.

Verse 10. In the holy tabernacle I served before him; and so was I established in Sion.

11. Likewise in the beloved city he gave me rest, and in Jerusalem was my power.

12. And I took root in an honorable people, even in the portion of the LORD's inheritance.

13. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress tree upon the mountains of Hermon.

14. I was exalted like a palm tree in En-gaddi, and as a rose plant in Jericho, as a fair olive tree in a pleasant field, and grew up as a plane tree by the water.

15. I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon and aspalathus, and I yielded a pleasant odor like the best of myrrh, as galbanum and onyx, and sweet storax, and as the fume of frankincense in the tabernacle.

16. As the turpentine tree I stretched out my branches, and my branches are honor and grace.

17. As the vine brought I forth pleasant savor, and my flowers are the fruit of honor and riches.

In the 15th chapter of John, CHRIST is compared to the vine, the same comparison being used in Ezekiel and elsewhere in Scripture. In Proverbs iii. 16 Wisdom is said to carry in her right hand length of days, and in her left hand riches and honor: and Wisdom is the Spirit of the Law.

Verse 18. I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge, and holy hope: I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him.

We see Wisdom here personified in the feminine character, I am the mother, &c.; for the Virgin Mother and the Spirit are one and the same.

This verse may throw much light upon several verses of John, in which the same Wisdom speaks in CHRIST, the personification of the Law. This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which *he hath given me* I should lose nothing (John vi. 39). Again: I have manifested [that is, the Law has made known] thy name unto the men which *thou gavest me* out of the world (John xvii. 6).

Verse 19. Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits.

This verse will remind every reader of the invitation in Matt. xi. 28, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. This is an invitation to the afflicted to come to the Law; but, as we must repeat, the Law was wisdom only as conceived in the Spirit, according to the view in the gospel. We find similar language in Isaiah: Ho, every one that thirsteth [thirsteth, that is, for wisdom], come to the waters [that is, to the sacred Scriptures, which were symbolized by waters].

Verse 20. For my memorial [continues the son of Sirach] is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honey-comb (Vide Ezek. iii. 3).

21. They that eat me shall yet be hungry [hungry

for more wisdom], and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty [thirsty for more spiritual wine].

The language in this verse must remind every one of the similar language in John vi. 53, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. The Son of Man, in John, is the Wisdom speaking in Ecclesiasticus. The Jew had but one thing to eat and to drink, and that was the Law: in its letter, flesh; in its Spirit, blood (Prov. ix. 5).

Verse 22. He that obeyeth me shall never be confounded, and they that work by me shall not do amiss.

To work by me, as expressed in this verse, means to work by the Law, and this means to obey or walk in the Law; or it means, as in John, to follow Christ (ch. viii. 12), or, to abide in the vine (ch. xv. 4); for the vine is the Law.

The teaching in the two portions of Scripture is precisely the same. In the gospel it is Christ that speaks; but Christ is the personification of the Law, seen in its Spirit of wisdom; whereas in Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom is represented as speaking herself: but it is the Wisdom of the Law, and it is the Law of Moses; for now we read:

Verse 23. All these things are the book of the covenant of the most high God, *even the Law which Moses commanded for an heritage unto the congregations of Jacob.*

To the same purpose, we read in Baruch, in the midst of the most solemn and pious exhortations (ch. iii. 9): Hear, Israel, the commandments of Life; give ear to understand wisdom;—that is, give ear to understand the wisdom, the Life of the Law of Moses; for, in the 1st verse of the 4th chapter, the prophet tells us expressly to what he refers, almost in the words of Ecclesiasticus: This is the Book of the Commandments of GOD, and the Law that endureth forever: all they that keep it shall come to life; but such as leave it shall die. This Law that endureth forever, is the Law of Moses, seen in its Spirit, and this is the Word of St. John.

The writer of Ecclesiasticus deals openly with us, and tells us plainly that he has been speaking of the Law in all that he says in praise of Wisdom. In the 24th verse of the chapter above cited, he shows still further his exalted opinion of the Law, referring undoubtedly to its Spirit under the name of the LORD, adding: For the LORD Almighty is GOD alone, and beside him there is no other Saviour.

This Saviour was the Law; but this, in its Spirit, is the LORD, and the Holy One of Israel. This Saviour the Pharisaic portion of the Jews imagined as a person and looked for him in the then future: modern Christians no less regard him as a person, and imagine they have a history of his advent in the past. The Essenes conceived him as a Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Wisdom of the Law—eternal as the Word with GOD in the beginning, and yet expressed in the written Law, which was designed to bring the Spirit into activity in its faithful followers. This spirit is personified in CHRIST.

It is needless to pursue this illustration any further, particularly as every student owes it to himself to examine the sacred writings for himself, and should seek to discover what that is, in the Scriptures, which gives them such life and power, and which, as seen principally in the Law, gave the Evangelists a subject for their spiritual histories, by which they have thrown a spell over a large portion of mankind for many centuries, and which can never lose their influence in the world.

No one need imagine that this view excludes that "quickening of the human spirit which (is said) to put it into vital and sensitive relations to the holy and the eternal; that illumination of the mind, whereby it is enabled to perceive with clearness the real nature of truth and righteousness; that empowering of the will, to the conflict and the victory—the entire process of restoring the divine image in the soul of man, and freeing it from the bondage of the enslaved will."

To understand this, we have only to know that this end was the very object of the Law. Hence the language of Baruch iv. 2: Walk in the presence of the Light thereof [the Light of the commandments, verse 1], that thou mayest be illuminated. Here we see the reason why the representative of the Law called himself the way, the truth, and the life; these being one in the Law, for the Law is the way to its own truth, and this is, again, the Life that "endureth forever." The necessary condition is obedience; and as this was a result of faith, faith itself came to be regarded as a necessary condition.

A mere verbal reference to the Law as the Law, or the Word of God, can give no one any adequate idea of what a Jew saw in the Book of the Lord, to whom it was as life itself. The fulfilment of its promises was looked upon as resulting from the immediate exercise of the power of God. Hence the blessings which flowed from a compliance with the Law, were attributed to the exercise of a personal will, or power, by which God made good his Word; while the evils, following in the train of those who "departed from the Law," were no less regarded as proceeding from God's immediate judgment in the punishment of the wicked. Every kind of suffering and affliction was considered as a judgment for some sinful disobedience of the Law, the Word; and, in this belief, the afflicted threw themselves upon the Lord, imploring his mercy with earnest promises of future obedience to his Law, always meaning the Law of Moses.

It is in accordance with the express words of the Law itself, that the evils of life were regarded as resulting from a neglect of it.

If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this Law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this Law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed (Deut. xxviii. 58–61).

On the other hand, it was promised, that, if the people would "hearken to the judgments, and keep and do them" (Deut. vii. 12), then the Lord covenanted, or promised, to "take away all sickness," and the "evil diseases of Egypt," and "lay them upon their enemies" (Deut. vii. 15).

To understand how such declarations must have been received by the Jew, we must suppose him ignorant of the natural causes of sickness and disease. Then we may see how readily he would refer every sad visitation, every calamity, to the Lord. He would see in every affliction an evidence of both the truth of the Law, and of the power of God to enforce it.

Not only did the Jew look upon sickness, and all that class of sufferings not visibly dependent upon natural law, as immediately due to a personal will, exercised as a judgment of God for some breach of the Law, but the operations of nature in its ordinary course were referred to a similar exercise of a personal will; and this also was according to express declarations of the Law,—as may be seen in many places.

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit (Levit. xxvi.

3, 4). See also the curses denounced in Deut. xxviii. in case of disobedience. The disobedient Jew was cursed in the city, and in the field, and in every relation of life.

The Jew, judging after the flesh (John viii. 15), that is, after the letter of the Law, attributed all of the evils he encountered to a departure from the Law, and did not perceive that the Law itself, so far as it is true, depends upon a higher Law—that expressed in nature itself. This higher Law is the Spirit of the written Law, and the knowledge of it was the secret of the Essenes.

"The law of nature is the true original and the sanction of all laws"—and its rewards and penalties are fixed and unalterable. But as this law has been but little known, and men in all ages have shown but little disposition to discover and observe it, lawgivers have always been found to affix to their laws artificial sanctions addressed to the imaginations of men, in order to constrain them to an obedience for which reason has been found insufficient. Hence we find, even in the Law of Moses, that, in order to oblige men "to deal justly and love mercy," they were threatened, in case of disobedience, with sickness, and sore diseases, and great plagues; while, in truth, these calamities are due to other and natural causes, and did not proceed from a disobedience of the moral Law because it was given by Moses in the name of the LORD.

It is important to observe, nevertheless, that the Law of Moses is well founded in nature, and has successfully appealed to the experience of the world for unnumbered ages—a sure guarantee that it will continue to be respected and honored in the world. We may be the more certain of this when we understand that, besides the portions appealing more directly to the moral nature of man, there are other portions enclosing a less seen or more hidden sense, which comes to light only by a life founded in the spirit of truth and justice, duly tempered with charity and love, by which alone the soul enters into a knowledge of the higher secrets of its own spiritual nature.

SECTION III.

Having briefly shown in general that the Law is the basis of the later sacred writings of the Old Testament among the Jews, we have a few words to say of the general teaching in the gospels, in order that they also may be seen to be only an extension of the same teaching, with no other modification than may be easily explained by supposing an advancement of civilization, if not among the Jews as a nation, at least, among the writers of the gospels.

That which may be called the personal teaching of Christ, gathered together, as it were, and presented in a small compass, may all be found, though scattered, in the Old Testament. When Christ calls attention to himself,—as where he uses the language, "Follow me," —he speaks as the representative of the Law. This language is to be understood as addressed to the Essenes, and it is a warning or command to follow the Law. The Law is the Word, the Word of God; and Christ represents the Word.

The most divine and concentrated teaching in the world is contained in the 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew, commonly called the Sermon on the Mount, though this expression is sometimes applied more particularly to the opening verses of the 5th chapter. These verses include the Beatitudes, which may be considered the kernel of Christian teaching, so far as this is directive of life. Nothing in writing can surpass this teaching in beauty, in simplicity, in depth, dignity, or importance; yet this teaching seems little else than a collection or bringing together of the scattered teachings of the Old Testament.

That this is so we need only examine a few of the leading texts.

And he opened his mouth and taught them saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The authority for this appears in the following passages:

Psalm li. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Psalm xxxiv. 18. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Proverbs xvi. 18, 19. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs xi. 2. When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom.

Proverbs xxix. 23. A man's pride shall bring him low; but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Isa. lvii. 15. For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Isa. lxvi. 2. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor [Blessed are the poor in spirit] and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Many more passages of the same import might be selected to illustrate the first beatitude. The second reads: Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

This may be supported from

Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. The spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek [this applies to the third beatitude, to be recited presently]; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted [this applies to the first], to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our GOD; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, &c.

The third beatitude reads:—

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

This is a transcript of the 11th verse of the 37th Psalm—But the meek shall inherit the earth.

By an examination of the Old Testament it may be thus seen that the Sermon on the Mount is but little else than a choice collection of the most beautiful, impressive, and important teachings scattered throughout the older writings, here brought together very judiciously and put into the mouth of Christ, who personates the Spirit of the older writings. Whatever merit, to use this word, there may be in making the selections and presenting them in a somewhat dramatic form, is due to the author of the gospel.

The most remarkable specific instruction which may be referred to Christ as an individual is perhaps the "new commandment"—That ye love one another (John xiii. 34); yet why this should be called a new commandment is not so clear, since it is virtually expressed in the Levitical law—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. xix. 18). But independently of this the doctrine of Love, as the ground of a divine life, is the central doctrine of Plato's Symposium.

This doctrine appears in systems which, in other respects, may be supposed to diverge widely from each other; for this is the central doctrine of Spinoza, as may be seen throughout Part fifth of the Ethics, but especially in the 36th proposition, where love is described as the principle of unity between God and man.

If the Spirit of the New Testament is milder, more humane and beneficent than that of the Old, this presents a difficulty for the literalist who contends for the doctrine of a supernatural origin of the Testaments in a miraculous sense. To the author, and upon his point of view, such a difference presents no difficulty. We must, on the contrary, naturally look for some evidences of advancement in civilization among a people who received at Alexandria, as is well known, the best fruits of Grecian learning and philosophy.

That differences do really exist in the gospels, wholly irreconcilable with the idea of their being so many actual histories, is a fact which can be made so apparent that no candid inquirer can deny it. One of the ready modes of seeing these differences is to take any one distinct statement, and observe how the writers of the several gospels depart from the order of facts recorded as following it. For example: the Lord's prayer occurs in Matthew vi. 9–13; in Luke it occurs with a slight variation, in chapter xi. verses 2–4; but the teachings which follow in the respective chapters are entirely different from each other, and can only find parallels in dispersed portions of the gospels—the teaching on the whole being the same, but not the order of it: which shows that the writers were bound, indeed, by a certain truth of doctrine, but not at all confined by a regard to historical verity.

The saying (Matt. vi. 24),—No man can serve two masters,—which appears in Matthew as a part of the teaching following the prayer, as if uttered in the same presence or upon the same occasion, is found in Luke xvi. 13, as if uttered in the presence of another assemblage, very many events and teachings having intervened between this saying in Luke and the prayer in the 11th chapter. The prayer itself is dispersed in both

Mark and John, portions of it appearing in widely separated places—the prayer, as a whole, or as a unity, not being in either of these gospels.

Again: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, all refer to the dove as descending from heaven and lighting upon Jesus (Matt. iii. 16; Mark i. 10; Luke iii. 22; John i. 32); and if we suppose ourselves dealing with history, we must refer these four accounts to one fact in the life of Jesus. There are some slight variations, however, in the mode of representing this fact in the four gospels; but, regarded as history, the descent of the dove seems to be a single fact recorded by all four of the gospel writers, and the slight variations in the language heard as from heaven may be passed over as unimportant or due possibly to copyists or translators.

Three of the historians also represent that, after this descent of the dove, Jesus was led—one says "immediately"—into the wilderness to be tempted; and they agree that he was in the wilderness forty days (Matt. iv. 1, 2; Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1, 2). Let it be granted that here also the writers give us actual history; then, how is it to be explained that John not only says nothing of this forty days' temptation in the wilderness, but gives us a totally different history, as following the descent of the dove, precisely recording the succession of events in a succession of days, thus:—

The descent of the dove is recorded in chapter i. verse 32; the "next day" (verse 35) another incident is recorded; and on the "third day" (chapter ii. 1)

Jesus is represented as performing a miracle at Cana of Galilee, when, according to the three first gospels, he was in the wilderness; and John then proceeds with his account of Jesus, taking no notice of the forty days in the wilderness.

This difference cannot be reconciled with the notion of an actual history, without making such violent assumptions, and showing such disregard of the ordinary rules of criticism, as would not be tolerated in the case of any other history.

And now, the dissonance being clearly pointed out, what shall be said? Must the story be regarded as divine, and held sacred and protected from the inroads of criticism?—must we receive the story with so much the more awe and reverence as supernatural, in proportion as we find it repugnant to natural reason? or, ought we not rather to say, that the story is not history, and then seek its meaning from another point of view?

Let us look at the story from a mythical point of view, and see if a plain interpretation is not at hand; and let us deal openly with the subject without any circumlocution. Candor is an essential element in a seeker of the truth—the very dove itself in this inquiry.

The Law, then, or the Hebrew sacred books, is the subject of the gospel, or of all four of the gospels. Jesus Christ, although a person who brought to light the grace and truth of the Law (John i. 17), is not a person as represented in the four gospels, but a personification; and he personates the Law, the writers aiming, through him, to teach the Spirit of the Law. Christ, in his most mysterious character, is the Spirit of the Law, its grace and truth—the name of Jesus being thus used because he was animated by the Truth in a preëminent degree, and because he brought to light and taught the grace and truth of the Law.

Now, the writers of the four gospels belonged to a secret society holding a common doctrine, sworn not to disclose it, and sworn also not to write of it except in allegory and symbolism.

In teaching this doctrine, which for convenience we may call the doctrine of the Spirit, or the Truth, as underlying the letter of the Law, each writer used what we may call a double liberty, to wit, a liberty of appropriating each other's figures, symbols, and machinery, and the liberty of departing from them at pleasure, on the one condition of exhibiting the doctrine according to their common understanding of it.

Let us now suppose that Christ represents the Law in its Spirit; and that all four of the gospel writers use the same symbol, that of the dove to indicate that the Law, in its Spirit, teaches Truth, symbolized by the dove, as essential to the divine life shadowed out in the Law.

Now, the three first writers, taking the hint from each other, or from a common original, recognize in the history of the *Exodus* a divine type of the history of man in his passage from the natural to the spiritual life, not as an actual history, but as a divine fable or drama.

Upon looking at the history, as it is in Exodus, disregarding details, we find the Israelites commencing their march in Egypt, the symbol of the darkness or ignorance of the natural man. It is signalized by the Passover (Exodus, ch. xii.). This is the commencement of the progress of the natural man towards the spiritual life, which begins at (a symbolic) midnight (verse 29); and his first movement is towards a certain wilderness (ch. xiii. 20); and the Israelites were forty years in the wilderness.

Now, CHRIST, as a representative being, is in some sort an epitome of the Law; and hence, after his entrance upon the Truth, figured by the dove descending upon him, he is carried by three of the gospel writers into the wilderness,—"immediately," according to Mark,—where he remains under temptation forty days—this being a mere image of the Law, designed to illustrate its spiritual meaning.

But John, writing with freedom, did not feel confined or under obligation to use the machinery of the other three gospel writers; and although he uses the symbol of the dove, he adds to it that of the Lamb; and he makes the Law, in its letter, which is represented by the Baptist, characterize the Spirit by the two emblems, those of innocence and truth; but he does not think it necessary, for his design, to use the scene in the wilderness, and therefore says nothing of it. This is proper enough, so long as we consider the subject mythically treated, but it is inconsistent with the notion of an actual history.

The original story in the Law, being itself a myth, has the nature of a formula in science. Its truth does not lie in its being actual; but it lies in its applicability to life, which is infinitely varied as to particulars, while exhibiting a constancy according to the Spirit. Some men may be full forty years in the wilderness, but others may not be thus tempted even forty days; while yet the ideal, as conceived by the sacred writers, seems to require that life shall be tempted in some form or other as a test of its virtue. This, in Scripture, is compared to trying gold in the fire; and a good man is compared to gold "thrice refined," or thrice tried, as in the temptation scene itself.

John, for his purposes, does not feel bound to make a distinct scene of the temptation, and therefore does not send Christ into the wilderness, but exhibits him as at once entering upon his office, the office of the Spirit of Truth; his first act being that of changing water (the letter) into wine, and then he is seen in the act of cleansing the Church of its mercenary spirit.

It will serve to illustrate the fact that the Hebrew sacred Law is the proper subject of the gospels, to notice the parable of the Sower, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke—John giving no account of this, or, indeed, of any of the parables. The reader will perceive that the *seed* in this parable is no other than the Law.

The parable of the Sower occurs in the 13th chapter of Matthew; at the conclusion of which we read:

Verse 9. Who hath ears to hear let him hear:—that is, let him understand—intimating a mystery in the teaching; and then we read:

Verse 10. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11. He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

What, now, was it that the people did not understand? It was the *seed:* they did not understand the *seed* that was sown; and in the 19th verse the disciples are told that the *seed*, in the parable, was the Word of the kingdom. This was no other than the Law of Moses, which, in this same parable as recorded by Mark, is called simply the Word; while in Luke it is called, as we shall see, the Word of God—all three meaning one thing, and that is, the Law of Moses: and Matthew says, or means to teach, that to those who are able to understand even a little of the Law, more shall be given; but those who saw it only in the letter should lose even that.

This parable, in Mark, occurs in the 4th chapter, after which we read, as in Matthew:

Verse 9. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10. And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God [called the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, in Matthew]; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.

12. That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

13. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

Here it is implied that there are many parables to be known before the Scriptures can be understood.

The interpretation which follows these verses in Mark—to wit, The Sower soweth the Word—is itself obscure in this allusion to the Word, without further explanation; but we may be sure it was not the mere verbal word of Christ in the parable itself but the word of the Law, called, in Matthew, the Word of the kingdom; and in Luke, the Word of God.

In Luke, the corresponding passages occur in the 8th chapter.

Verse 8. And when he had said these things he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10. And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in

parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11. Now the parable is this: the seed is the Word of God.

In Matthew, the seed is called the Word of the kingdom; in Mark it is called simply the Word; but here, in Luke, it is called the Word of God; and certainly all three refer to the Law of Moses as the Word of God.

In Luke viii. 18, we read: Take heed therefore how ye hear [meaning, take heed how ye understand what ye hear; to wit, the Word, the Word of the kingdom, the Word of God, *the Law of Moses*]; for whosoever hath [or understands something of that Word], to him shall be given [he shall understand more]; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he *seemeth* to have.

The word *seemeth* is introduced here because the passage has reference to the Law in its letter; for he who clings to the letter *seemeth* indeed to have something; but the letter is a merely temporal or time-serving prop. It cannot accompany the soul through the dark passage, and is thence said to be taken away: for the Law of Moses is not the Light itself. It is not the Christ (John i. 20), but a witness only: and it proves a witness only to those who receive its Seed in "good ground," having an "honest and good heart;" who (Luke xiii. 15), having heard the Word (the Law), keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

The varied teaching which follows the parable in

Luke, differing from that in Matthew, is of no importance from the mythical point of view; but is irreconcilable with the notion of a history supernaturally enacted, and recorded by inspired writers, infallibly protected from deviations from the precise order of facts.

We may see that the passage into the country of the Gadarenes is recorded in the 5th chapter of Mark, as occurring after the parable of the Sower was delivered; but in Matthew it is recorded as preceding the parable. This does not affect the doctrine in the least; but if the gospels are actual histories, this, and many such inversions, are hardly excusable.

It is remarkable that there are no parables in the gospel of John, the opening of the 10th chapter hardly coming under this name; but it is itself the greatest of all parables.

In order to reach a right conception of the spirit of the writings, subsequent to the Law and now bound up with the Law, it seems necessary for modern Christians to look upon the Scriptures, not with less, but with far more respect and awe than they are commonly supposed to do. The Scriptures must rise, or be "exalted" in their estimation to that point of holiness and sacredness, when they shall seem, as it were, to touch divinity. They must appear as the immediate expression of the will or Word of God. They must even seem to "vanish" in the Spirit of God, the line of separation, as just intimated, becoming invisible.

When the Word of the Law and the Word of God are seen to be one, the student is prepared to understand the allusions to the Law as the Holy One of Israel and as the Saviour (Isa. xliii. 3); besides whom there is no Saviour (verse 11); addressed in the language, O God of Israel, the Saviour (Isa. xlv. 15); and represented as declaring, I the Lord am the Saviour (ch. xlix. 26); this language finding its explanation in the exalted estimate placed by the Jew upon the sacred Law, which came not to condemn the world, but to save the world (John iii. 17). The Law was regarded as one with its Father, the Spirit of Truth, as declared in the New Testament, where the Law personified is the chief actor, and speaks of itself as the way, the truth, and the life—the Law being the truth, and the way to life.

This language must be understood in reference to the Law, as written and unwritten; the latter being the Spirit of the former, standing in relation to it, notwithstanding the declared unity, as fire to water; this relation being set forth also in the declaration,—My Father is greater than I; and again, in the caution, John xiii. 16, repeated ch. xv. 20, Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord—for the *servant*, in this allusion, is the written Law, which is but as a servant to the Spirit of the Law.

Where Christ seems to speak most emphatically in the first person, in either of the gospels, he nevertheless speaks as the representative of the Law, either as it is written or as its Spirit. In the answer to Pilate (John xviii. 37), he speaks as the written Law, and attributes to himself the very office assigned to the Baptist at the commencement of the gospel: To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

In Matthew vii. 21, the reference is verbally to the Father: Not every one that saith unto me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven: or, as it is in John xiii. 17: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye DO them. The things to be known and done were the purifying precepts of the Word of GOD. The real reference is to the Law, because the Law is the expression of the will of the Father.

Luke xi. 28 reads: Blessed are they that hear the Word of GOD, and keep it:—for this is to do the will of the Father, as expressed above—the Word of GOD and the will of the Father being known through the Law. But the Spirit of the Law, as the LORD, was the secret of the Essenes.

Each gospel should be considered by itself; not as a history, but as a mystical mode of teaching a doctrine, the doctrine or "leaven" of the Essenes, and not that of the Pharisees, who are represented in John viii. 15 as "judging after the flesh."

The seeming truth, as a history, being thus disregarded, the doctrinal and more important truth will the more readily appear; and then, however much John's gospel may be thought to deviate from historical order, it will be found to be in beautiful accordance with the doctrine of the Spirit.

SECTION IV.

This mode of study has, in former ages, been pursued by at least one portion of an undefined class of contemplative students, under the name of Hermetic philosophy. It was prosecuted in secret during the middle ages, to avoid the fires of persecution. But this class itself, like Masonry, has always had within itself the Catechumen and the Adept, the "Disciple" and the "Master" (Luke vi. 40). The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

The master looks at the subject, as it were, from within: he contemplates the idea, and never mistakes the expression for the substance, and yet is ready to honor the expression when seen through the idea, or the life.

The attentive student of Hermetic philosophy can hardly fail to see that the real subject of that philosophy is religion. It is the esoteric side of religion. If the author has made himself understood, it must be seen that the Essenes were a class of esoteric or Hermetic philosophers among the Jews, who were in possession of what they regarded as the secret meaning of the Hebrew sacred books.

Whilst the Essene society maintained its secrecy, it lived side by side amicably with the Jewish church; but finally, as already explained in the 13th Section of the preceding Part of this work, the accessions from the "without," principally through the preaching of St. Paul, introduced what ultimately proved a foreign element into the society, many being received who did not fully understand the doctrine of the Essenes. The preaching also becoming public, this class was increased, and the society received the name of Christians, given at Antioch.

This was the beginning of the *visible* Christian Church, which, for a length of time, continued to be directed by genuine Essenes, some of whom were among those who were the so-called Fathers of the Church.

But, before the disciples received the Christian name, first given to them at Antioch, they were called Ebionites and Nazarenes, the former name indicating their humility, under the Hebrew word *Ebion*, signifying the *poor*—meaning the poor or humble in spirit; though this word afterwards was misunderstood as signifying, in some cases, the worldly poor, and in others, the poor in understanding. The Ebionites and the Nazarenes are referred to by the Fathers as having a gospel among themselves (in Hebrew), quoted by Jerome among others, some supposing it to have been the gospel of Matthew, without the genealogy. But a principal citation by Jerome is not in the present gospel of Matthew. The passage is in these words: But it came to pass that when the Lord came up from the water [the Jordan], the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit came down, and rested upon him, and said to him, In all the Prophets I looked for thee, that thou mightest come, and I might rest upon thee. Thou art my rest; thou art my first-born Son, who reignest forever.

Epiphanius, speaking of the Nazarenes, says that "they gave themselves neither the name of Jesus nor of Christ, but of Nazarenes; and all Christians were then called Nazarenes. But it came to pass, that in a little time they were called Jesseans, before the disciples began to be called Christians at Antioch. They were called Jesseans, I suppose," continues Epiphanius, "from Jesse; forasmuch as David descended from Jesse."

There are not wanting those who suppose that Epiphanius mistook the name of *Jesseans* for that of *Essæans*—his derivation being a mere supposition at best, so nearly do we meet with an acknowledgment that the first Christians were *Esseneans.*

A more important point in connection with this is, that the Ebionites and a portion of the Nazarenes, if these were two sects, claimed that Jesus was a "mere man;" while some of them considered Christ as the Spirit, that came upon him at Jordan; and they were of opinion further that the Spirit neither was nor could be crucified.

Cerinthus and Carpocras are quoted as of similar opinions; but it is evident that the Fathers wrote vaguely, and that some of them had but little knowledge of the actual state of the early Church. We say some of them; for it can hardly be doubted that others were genuine Essenes, bound by a most solemn oath not to disclose the secret doctrine—an opinion which must aid us materially in clearing up many contradictions in their writings, as a whole; some writing with *insight*, but many looking through a glass darkly.

How, otherwise, can we understand the allusion to *mysteries* concealed by an oath, to be found in the *Apology* by Tertullian, where this Father defends the Christians from their enemies by an argument: "If we always keep hid," says he, "how are those things known, which we are said to commit? Nay, who could make them known? Such as are guilty! Not so, surely: for all *mysteries* are of course under *an oath of secrecy.* The Samothracian, the Eleusinian mysteries are concealed [he means by an oath, of course]; how much rather such as, being discovered, would now provoke the justice of men, and might expect to meet with that of God hereafter."

This was said in defence of the early Christians by one who must have known that they had among them a *secret*, protected from discovery by a solemn oath. That secret, as we suppose, had reference to the Hebrew Law, and was the doctrine of the Spirit—the Spirit of the Law.

Clemens Alexandrinus is quoted as saying that "the Christian discipline was called *Illumination*, because it brought hidden things to light—the master (CHRIST) alone removing the *cover* of the Ark" [that is, the *vail* over the writings of Moses, as alluded to by St. Paul in 2 Cor. iii. 14].

This passage may be considered a commentary upon John i. 17: For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth [that is, its grace and truth] came by JESUS CHRIST.

"Origen makes the encampments of the Israelites in their journey to the Promised Land to be Symbols of mysteries describing the way to such as shall travel towards heaven or heavenly things." Origen compares the Scriptures to a man, as Philo tells us the Essenes did. "As a man," says he, "consists of a body, a soul, and a spirit, so does the sacred Scripture, which has been mercifully given for the salvation of mankind." In another place he says, "The sacred Scripture is like a man. For as a man consists of a rational soul, of a sentient or sensuous soul, and of a body; so, in like manner, have the divine books a threefold sense; that is, an historical and grammatical sense; also, a moral sense; and finally, a spirit or a spiritual sense."

Even Justin Martyr calls the predictions of the prophets, Symbols, Parables, and Mysteries—as he is quoted from the dialogue with Trypho the Jew.

Nothing is more certain than that the early Christians had a secret, the careful preservation of which is the true explanation of the fact, that so little is known of the actual history of the Church in the first century, during which what may be called the esoteric side of the Church was preserved.

That the esoteric view was overborne by the popular opinion, only shows how difficult it is for the "common mind" to comply with the injunction of Christ to the woman at the well—God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John iv. 24).

Gradually an external faith, a faith in history, took the place in the Christian Church of the doctrine of the Spirit, as it had done in the older Church from an early period to which no date can be assigned.

The oath of secrecy was religiously observed, not only on account of a sense of obligation to the oath itself, but because of a belief that the non-initiated, or the "without," as they are called in the parable of the Sower, were incapable of appreciating the doctrine of the Spirit—so called by St. Paul, especially in his Epistle to the Galatians, which the Masonic writer, Dr. Oliver, calls a truly Masonic Epistle!

It is remarkable that in alluding to Peter, Origen refers to Jesus as a teacher of *the Spirit of the letter.* After telling us that those of the Jews who received Jesus Christ were called Ebionites, he adds: "And Peter for a good while appears to have observed the Jewish customs according to the Law of Moses, as having not yet learned of Jesus *to ascend from the letter to the Spirit of the Law*—as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles (chap. x. 9)." This distinct reference to the Spirit of the Law by Origen shows him very clearly to have been an Essene. The reader may find something to interest him on this subject in some critical remarks upon a book entitled Nazarenus, published in the first volume of Toland's Pieces.

Now, it must be observed, that while the Fathers prepared a creed for the "without"—that is, for the external Church, which has continued to repeat it from age to age, expressing the popular belief in an actual history, the Hermetic philosophers had their creed also, the truth of which was designed to be seen internally or in a spiritual sense, and not historically.

These two creeds, although unlike to the external sense, have nevertheless many points in common; and may serve to express, though diversely, the common ground on which a high spiritual philosophy, and a pure spirit of religion, do actually unite, or rather manifest their common origin.

If this is supposed to degrade religion, it elevates philosophy; and a true insight into this subject will show, that the union of reason and faith is the true marriage of which it is said, What GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

The Hermetic creed is embraced in what is called THE SMARAGDINE (or *Emerald*) TABLE. It is attributed to Hermes; but its real history, like that of the Church creed itself, is entirely unknown.

There are portions of the Church creed which must be considered as addressed to the followers of the

Church exclusively, with which the Hermetic view has no necessary connection; while, on the other hand, the philosophic creed contains some things with which the visible Church may be supposed to have no sympathy. But whilst this is admitted, the principal points of harmony in the two creeds are the vital points of both of them,—as will be seen by a comparison of the two, which we now proceed to make.

The 1st article of the Hermetic creed reads thus:

1. *This is true and far distant from a lie: whatsoever is below is like that which is above; and that which is above is like that which is below. By this are acquired and perfected the miracles of one thing.*

Here is a positive affirmation of something as true; and God is Truth: and in the declaration of the likeness of the *two*, called the *above* and the *below*, we must recognize a certain likeness or similitude in what are called in the creed, *heaven* and *earth;* for these are declared in the creed to be the work of God, who cannot be supposed to have made any thing contrary to himself, or to his own nature.

To this 1st article of the Hermetic creed, therefore, we find a clear and decided parallel in the 1st article of the Church creed, to wit:

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

The 2d article in the Hermetic creed reads thus:

2. *Also; as all things were made from One, by the help of One; so all things are made from One thing by conjunction.*

In this One (thing), from which and by which all things were made, must be recognized the WORD, as expressed in the gospel of John—by whom all things were made, and without him was not any thing made that was made. This WORD is declared in the 2d article of the Church creed, in continuation of the 1st, as a person, thus:

2. And in JESUS CHRIST, his only Son, our LORD.

Here the ONE of the 2d article of the Hermetic creed is personified as JESUS CHRIST, because he taught the Spirit of the Law.

The 3d Hermetic article, in continuation of the 2d, reads:

3. *The Father thereof is the Sun, and the Mother thereof is the Moon; the Wind carries it in its Belly, and the nurse thereof is the Earth.*

Here the Sun and the Moon must be taken as symbols of the invisible Father and the visible Mother of all things, commonly called Nature.

This is expressed in the 3d article of the Church creed, in continuation of the 2d, thus:

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, [and] born of the Virgin Mary. Here, the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary are themselves symbolical expressions for the invisible Father and visible Mother, figured in the Hermetic creed by the Sun and the Moon.

The allusion to the Wind, and to the Earth, in the Hermetic article, must be considered as a philosophic declaration, that living things must have *air* and *body* —life being, in truth, the subject of both of these creeds.

We now come to the 4th article of the Hermetic creed, thus:

4. *This is the mother or fountain of all perfection; and its power is perfect and entire, if it be changed into earth.*

The attentive reader will remember that the loved disciple is *perfected* at the foot of the Cross by the reception of the MOTHER; and may understand what that is, which, in the 4th article of the Hermetic creed, is called the Mother or Fountain of all perfection.

The *earth* is here used as a symbol of what the Hermetic philosophers call the *fixation* of the matter of the philosopher's stone; which is a mystical mode of teaching the necessity of practice, no doctrine being considered as established until introduced into life and made actual by practice. Doctrine without practice is like faith without works—of no value.

The 5th article of the Hermetic creed reads thus:

5. *Separate the Earth from the Fire, and the subtle and thin from the gross and thick; but, prudently, with long suffering, gentleness, and patience, and with wisdom and judgment.*

This refers to what the Hermetic writers call the preparation in their art, commonly described as the purification of the matter of the stone—in one word, they mean, the purification of man. This has no parallel in the Church creed itself; but it was a principal object of the older Law, figured under external observances and symbolic representations, among which may be especially named the rebuilding of the Temple.

The real object was the purification of the heart; called, in the Hermetic creed, the separation of the earth from the fire, the subtle and thin from the gross and thick—meaning the pure from the impure; which was to be done prudently, with wisdom and patience; there being nothing more difficult than to bring about a wise reformation of a man imbedded in what are called the follies, vanities, and pleasures of the world. This state of purification is supposed to be attained in the gospel of John, expressed in these words (chapter xv. 3), Now ye are *clean* through the Word [the Word of the Law] which I have spoken unto you.

The 6th article of the Hermetic creed refers still to the *One* named in the 2d article, and reads:

6. *It ascends from Earth up to Heaven, and descends again from the Heaven to the Earth; and receives the powers and efficacy of the superiors and inferiors.*

In order to show the parallel to this, we will recite here several of the Church articles, from the 4th to the 8th inclusive, as they are all connected together and refer to the *One* who is the subject of both creeds. The 4th article is in continuation of the 3d, thus:

4. [He, the One] Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

5. He descended into Hell;

6. The third day he rose again from the dead:

7. He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

8. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Every student of theology is aware of the controversies that have had place in the Church on the 5th article of the creed—He descended into Hell.

It is not our purpose to remark upon this. We see that the Son is represented as passing from Hell to Heaven; from whence he comes to judge the quick and the dead.

In the Hermetic creed, the *One* is said to pass from Earth to Heaven, and from thence descends again to Earth, with wonderful powers, which we shall see expressed in the 8th Hermetic article, preceded by the 7th, which reads thus:

7. *In this work, you acquire to yourself the wealth and glory of the whole world: drive therefore from you all cloudiness or obscurity, and darkness, and blindness.*

In this article, the words wealth and glory must be taken figuratively as signifying truth and wisdom, which the Spirit is supposed to acquire in the successful experiences of life, by which it learns the true equilibrium or Sabbath of Rest. But, to this end, it is necessary for the Spirit to preserve its ascendency; hence the promises to him that "overcometh," so frequently repeated in the revelation, coupled however with the warning, He that hath an ear, let him hear [that is, let him understand]; for it is not to be supposed that the Scriptures can be easily understood. On the contrary, a right-minded man can more readily understand his duty by a direct appeal to his own heart; and he may then be prepared to go in and out of the Scriptures themselves and find pasture (John x. 9).

The parallel to the 8th article of the Church creed is in the 8th article of the Hermetic creed, to wit:

8. *For the work increasing or going on in strength, adds strength to strength, forestalling and over-topping all other fortitudes and powers; and is able to subjugate and conquer all things, whether they be thin and subtle, or thick and solid bodies.*

Here the power of the ONE over the quick and the dead, as expressed in the 8th article of the Church creed, is described as a power over all things, whether they be thin and subtle [that is, quick or living], or thick and solid bodies [that is, over the dead].

If, now, it be admitted for a moment that the two creeds are, in truth and in fact, couched in mystical language, which can hardly be denied, then it requires no effort of the imagination to perceive, that they refer to one and the same mystery, represented as history in the visible Church, but "spiritually discerned" by the followers of the esoteric view.

The remaining articles of the Church creed may be considered as addressed to the visible Church, as points of instruction in faith.

9. I believe in the Holy Ghost.

10. The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints;

11. The forgiveness of sins;

12. The resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

There are no direct parallels to these four articles in the Hermetic creed, which concludes with two other articles or declarations, thus:

9. *In this manner was the world made; and hence are the wonderful conjunctions or joinings together of the matter and parts thereof, and the marvellous effects, when in this way it is done, by which these wonders are effected.*

10. *And for this cause I am called Hermes Trismegistus; for that I have the knowledge or understanding of the philosophy of the* THREE PRINCIPLES *of the* UNIVERSE. *My doctrine or discourse, which I have here delivered concerning the Solar Work, is complete and perfect.*

Here is the whole of the once celebrated Smaragdine Table, which may truly be called the creed of the Hermetic philosophers, who saw in it the doctrine of what they called the GREAT WORK of making the philosopher's stone. The *three principles of the Universe*, as used above, is only another expression for the Sacred TRINITY, which the Hermetic philosophers believed in without exception; though they entered into no controversies about *persons*, *substances*, or *things*.

This mystical fragment of antiquity, largely quoted and commented upon through the middle ages, was designed to indicate, though obscurely, something of the mysterious pilgrimage of the SOUL through a nature life; in the course of which, by transitions from evil to good and good to evil, represented as a passing from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth, it finally attains to a true recognition of its rest in GOD—the true end of the Christian cross.

SECTION V.

Let us now pass more particularly to the gospel according to John, or to portions of it, in view of the principle assumed, that the Law is the proper subject of the gospel, set forward as a person to speak, as it were, for itself; expressing however the opinions of an Essene teacher aiming to inculcate a belief in the Law as the Word, the Word of God, by which eternal life was brought to light.

The importance of the subject must excuse some repetitions, and also what may appear to be an unnecessary minuteness in explaining the point of view taken by the author.

He considers that the gospel is a writing: and a writing, so far as we have any means of knowing, by one only person, though the writer held opinions common with many others associated together as a brotherhood.

It is assumed, in this stage of the inquiry, that the object of the gospel was to teach certain doctrines to initiates of a secret brotherhood, by means of *parables*, *allegories*, and *symbolical* representations, referring to the older Hebrew Scriptures, principally to the Law—the doctrines, or the book containing them, being for this purpose personified.

The gospel is treated as a divine drama, the main object of which, we repeat, was to teach the divine Truth of the Law. This truth was considered as eternal life; and the Law was set forth as the way to it. This, therefore, may be considered as both the subject and the object of the gospel. This Life is personified in Christ, who is brought forward as a person to teach the Truth, the Word, the Wisdom, the Life of the Law;—the Law, as a writing, being the way to the truth or the life it contains.

As the Law is a writing, so is each of the gospels; and the fourth gospel is a writing by John. It is a gospel, or truth, according to John; and whatever he reports of others, it is still John who gives his version of a history; or it is John who exhibits his mode of teaching in the form of a history. The reader of the gospel is not brought into relation with any person except mediately through the writer of it. This consideration ought to be present in attempting to harmonize different portions of the gospel, either with the gospel itself, or with other portions of Scripture.

The author is aware of the almost infinite words, written and spoken, that have been expended upon the opening verses of the gospel according to John, in order to explain them or invest them with some meaning acceptable to the understanding; and he has this general remark to make—that, whoever attempts to explain the language of John in his five first verses, in reference to things *imagined*, instead of things *conceived*, must necessarily find himself involved in a net of contradictions. If God is imagined as one definable being, and the Word as another, no art of language can ever make the unity of the two beings conceivable; for no two things, as things, can be conceived as one.

The author therefore will make no attempt to explain these verses as addressed to the imaginative faculty; nor does he receive them in this stage of his inquiry as expressing what may be called positive truth. He regards the first verses of John as expressing an individual opinion of the writer of the gospel, by which he asserts or records a conception, as it lay in his own mind, in which Life was recognized as God. This conception is expressed in the well-known words:

John, Ch. I. 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was
2. with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the
3. beginning with God. 3. All things were made by him; and
4. without him was not any thing made that was made. 4. In
5. him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5. And
the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

To understand these opening verses of the fourth gospel, we must bear in mind the exalted character of the Hebrew Sacred Law in the estimation of the Jews, as shown in the preceding sections. The Law was conceived not merely as an inspired writing, but as, in truth, the Word of God—as if he spoke audibly in it.

The Hebrew Sacred Law is called in the parable of the Sower, in Matthew, the Word of the kingdom, meaning the kingdom of Heaven; in Luke, the Word of God; in Mark, simply the Word, as in the first verse of John.

We assume at first, that the gospel was intended to explain the Word [that is, the Law] to the initiates of a secret brotherhood, and that the writer of the gospel was a member of the secret order. We assume further, upon a hint from Philo, that the brotherhood regarded the Law as twofold, letter and spirit; or that the external letter contained an internal sense; this internal sense being the true Word, or the Truth; in itself, indestructible or eternal, and thence conceived as one with the self-existent God.

We must consider that the written Law originated in a Spirit (a Spirit of Truth), which was conceived as the Spirit of God, inseparable from God; or was looked upon as so proceeding from the Spirit as to be the immediate expression of the Will of God. The Word was also conceived as Life, and thus Life is the Spirit of the Law—in some places called eternal life.

This Life, or Spirit of the Law, has many names in Scripture, the use of which tends to confuse many students who do not perceive the unity in the variety.

Without determining the difference between the Jehovah and the Elohim, of which scholars have much to say, we may be certain that the Spirit of the Law is the Holy One of Israel, so often referred to in the prophecies. The same Spirit is the LORD, as used in the Psalms, and elsewhere in both the Old and the New Testaments. This Spirit is also called the Father, the Father of the written Law, as we shall show in the progress of this examination. This relation or conception of the Spirit as the Father supposes another, by which the written Law is regarded as the Son. But the Son also takes a double character.

The Law, in its spirit, is the Son of GOD; but as a writing it is the Son of Man: though these expressions are used interchangeably, because the Law was referred immediately to GOD, as we have shown in the preceding sections.

The Law, conceived in its Spirit, as the Son of GOD, is Life; and it is the eternal Word. It is of this Word, thus conceived, that John writes in the opening verses of the gospel.

We do not attempt to make this clear to the imagination, but we repeat, that in the opening verses of the gospel, we consider John, or the author of the gospel, as expressing a conception of Life, as it lay in his own mind; and Life was so conceived that the author of the gospel could not or cared not to distinguish or separate it from his idea of GOD, but rather gave the name of GOD to that conception. He calls LIFE the WORD; or conceived the Spirit of the Word [that is, of the Law] as Life; and this, as seen by the elect, or the "perfect" in the Essene sense, was referred to GOD, and conceived as one and the same with GOD.

It may be quite true that no verbal exposition of the use of this expression, the WORD, in the gospel of John, can make it more comprehensible to the understanding than as it reads in the gospel itself. If there is any thing in the universe which refuses to be definitely expressed in human language, it is probably that to which John referred, as the Word which was with GOD in the beginning, and was GOD. Commentators without number have labored to unfold the meaning of the expression. The WORD has been called Truth, and Power, and Wisdom, and it has been called Love; but not any of these expressions serve to explain the WORD, so as to bring it into what is commonly called comprehension. It appears to express something which is lost at the very moment the mind seems to seize it. As soon as it takes the form of an idea which can be named, it is no longer what it was; and this is perhaps the principal reason why it has been written about mystically in all ages.

This same thing, when recognized, will be seen to be more beautiful and more perfect, *because* essentially secured against accidents from exposure in ordinary writing. Let it be merely supposed, for the present, that there is one thing in the universe which is not subject to time-conditions, and which cannot be reached by any accident whatever—which may be imaged to some extent in writings, but cannot be directly expressed by any artificial means whatever (Ex. xx. 4); while yet the soul under suitable conditions may come into immediate relations with it.

It would seem as if all of the gospel writers conceived the Spirit of which they treat as Life, mysterious Life, which builds the fabric of the universe, a holy temple for itself. No mere words can make this appreciable to the senses; but by contemplation or holy meditation, it may be possible to realize how the idea was conceived by the authors of the gospels, who figured Life as a Builder, or as a carpenter's son, because it *builds* the bodies of all living beings.

By profound meditation, we say, the student, in a sacred frame of mind, may reach a conception which shall stand in his mind as an answer to the question, as it is in Mark vi. 3, Is not this the carpenter? or, as it reads in Matt. xiii. 55, Is not this the carpenter's son? or, again, he may see why Jesus is the son of Joseph, not without reference to Deut. xxxiii. 13–16: Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush; let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was *separated from his brethren.*

It will be seen by the preceding remarks, that the author does not wish to be understood as having attempted an explanation of the opening verses of John.

He prefers to regard them in the nature of a proposition, the object of the gospel being to bring the conception they enclose into living activity in the minds of the Essene initiates, for whose instruction the gospel is supposed to have been written.

The conception of the Spirit as underlying the Law, was unknown to the Scribes and Pharisees, and has remained unknown to their successors, by whom the Essenes were not and are not understood.

Let us regard the first verses of John, therefore, as enunciating a proposition, which may be expressed in these words: The Hebrew sacred Law is divine, whose Spirit is one with God.

If the modern Christian, believing in the divinity of the Scriptures, will substitute, in this proposition, the Bible for the sacred Law, and carry his mind upon its true meaning, he may, perhaps, approach very nearly the Essene conception. Let him consider the Bible as a living power, working wonders in the souls of men; and consider *what* that is which really works the wonders; and he may perhaps recognize what is called in the gospel the Spirit of Truth.

We must remind the reader yet once more that the Hebrew sacred Law was, to the Jew, the Word of the Kingdom of God, and was called the Word of God; and sometimes simply the Word, as in Mark, in the parable of the Sower. This Word, this Law, spiritually conceived, is eternal; or was so conceived, and hence the peculiar opening of John's gospel, where it is treated as in the beginning with God, &c.

Until the attention is called to the fact, but few readers of the Bible understand that they are reading what is called in a supreme sense the WORD, as the Word of GOD. Thus, in Deut. iv. 2, we read, Ye shall not add unto the WORD which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your GOD, which I command you. This WORD, the Word of GOD, the Law of Moses, conceived in its spirit, is the Word of St. John.

We may remark here that the Hindoos, or some sects among them, declared the doctrine of their own sacred books, the Vedas, to be eternal.

As yet, in this inquiry, we are confessedly standing upon an hypothesis. The gospel is assumed to be a mystical commentary upon the Law, addressed to initiates or novitiates of the Essene brotherhood, that they might discover the Spirit of the Law, and "see it for themselves and not another;" and we repeat this merely to guard against misapprehension. Let us now pass on to a few additional verses.

JOHN, CH. I. 6. ¶ There was a man sent from God, whose name
7. *was* John. 7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of
8. the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. 8. He
was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that
9. Light. 9. *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every
10. man that cometh into the world. 10. He was in the world,
and the world was made by him, and the world knew him
11. not. 11. He came unto his own, and his own received him
12. not. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he
power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe

13. on his name: 13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of
14. the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14.
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we
beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the
Father), full of grace and truth.

In verses 6 to 14 there are some sudden transitions. The meaning of these verses cannot be gathered from the verses themselves. Their sense must be discovered in the progress of the gospel, and the interpretation must still be considered hypothetical.

The transition from the WORD, as GOD, to John, the man sent from GOD, is very sudden. This John is the Baptist, as we shall see presently. He is declared to be a witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe—that is, believe in the Light, understood. John (verse 8) is not the Light, but a witness of it. The true Light (verse 9) lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, made by him, and was nevertheless unknown. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But, though "not received," as many as received him (verse 12), to them gave he power to become the sons of GOD, &c.

This is all said, thus far, by John the evangelist, the author of the gospel. He tells us of John (the Baptist), and calls him a man sent from GOD. This is the first element of symbolism. John the Baptist represents the letter of the Law.

The Law, in the opinion of the Essenes, was *sent* from GOD; and it was sent as a witness to a certain truth, called a LIGHT. That truth or Light is contained in the Law, which as a Letter is not the Light, but is a witness of it. The Life or Light was in the world [it made], but the world knew it not; for the gospel treats the natural man, a word used only for convenience, not only as ignorant of life, but symbolizes or figures this ignorance by death.

Now the Law comes to make the Light, or Life, known, but the world does not receive it; yet, as many as do receive *the Law*, to them *it* gives power to become the Sons of GOD. This is what is called in the gospel life eternal.

Hence the language of CHRIST, speaking in the name of the Law: The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, * * and I know that his commandment is life everlasting (John xii. 49, 50). This is conditioned however, as we shall see, upon obedience; or, it is Life to those only who receive the Law, as expressed in verse 12 of the 1st chapter, where they are called the Sons of GOD—the use of which language should be noticed, for it shows that the expression, Sons of GOD, is applicable to men; and it was applied (verse 13) to those which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.

To be "born of GOD," means to realize the truth, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of GOD," as expressed by St. Paul (1 Thess. ii. 13).

It is important to notice the declaration in verse 13, that the Sons of GOD are born of GOD; for it shows the opinion of the writer of the gospel, that the Light, of which he treats, is not received from external teaching.

A writing, therefore, may witness the truth, but it is not the truth itself; and this is the office of John, who is said to baptize with water, because water is the symbol of the letter, which the Baptist represents.

In verse 14 we meet with another sudden transition. The Word, used in the 1st verse, and dropped in the 6th, is here said to have been "made flesh." The paragraph in parenthesis—(we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father)—is supposed to have been a gloss in some early copy and subsequently taken into the text.

From the text, thus far, it is impossible to say that the Word is the "light" and a person, though this is assumed by many.

Light, as such, is not a person. Those who suppose it a person are in fact using the freedom of a symbolical interpretation; and not the less so because they find authority for it in the gospel.

If in the gospel itself John treats the person as a Light, and the Light as a person, as he seems to do, we may do the same; and if we hope to see the subject as John saw it, we must do the same.

According to the hypothesis we are using, the Word is the Law—in its Spirit eternal, in its expression temporal. As the Spirit, it is the Light and is personified in CHRIST; as a writing, it is personified in John the Baptist, who is said to witness the Light. This is said of a writing, which contains or expresses the

Light, while the Light, as referred to the writing, is said (verse 14) to have been made flesh—the letter being the flesh. The Letter is symbolized by water and by flesh; while the Truth or Life of the Letter is symbolized or figured by wine and spirit, as also by light, fire, the Holy Ghost, &c.

John, Ch. I. 15. ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This
was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is pre-
16. ferred before me; for he was before me. 16. And of his
17. fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17. For
the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by
18. Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the
only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he
hath declared *him*.

In verse 15 we find the Baptist again cited as a witness. In verse 7 he was a witness of the Light. In verse 14 the Light, as the Word, is said to have been made flesh; and now (verse 15), John is again appealed to as a witness, and he is referred to as saying of the Word made flesh: This was he of whom I spake.

Here the Baptist is represented as repeating something he had previously said: This was he of whom I spake [at some former time, not named], saying, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me.

This language has been explained in the Preface, and in the eleventh Section of the preceding Part of this work, to which the reader is referred. Let us merely repeat, in this place, that the Spirit, of which the letter is a witness, is eternal—the eternal Word;

and, as such, it "was before" the letter. It is said to come "after" the letter, in reference to the phenomenal man who receives it. Man, as a being born in time, a phenomenal being, is born to the Law already written. The Law, as a writing, is seen first by the man; that is, the phenomenal man sees the letter before he recognizes the Spirit, of which the letter is a witness. The Spirit is said to come after the letter only in reference to the phenomenal man; but when the Spirit is recognized, its beauty and importance are seen to transcend the letter: hence the Baptist says, He is preferred before me: and he gives the reason, to wit, using a paraphrase, he is seen to have been before me. For whoever sees the truth sees, at the same time, that it precedes the expression of it.

The letter, the Baptist, is the expression of the truth, and stands in the place of it until the truth itself is seen or recognized; but when the truth becomes known, it is known, at the same time, to be older than the letter; that is, it "was" before the letter. For this reason, it is preferred before the letter; and, as we shall see, it takes the place of the letter, which is said to "vanish," in Luke; while St. Paul counsels his followers, calling it Christ in the flesh, to leave it "behind."

It is not perfectly clear, from the text, whether the evangelist speaks in the first person in verses 16, 17, and 18, or whether he refers what is there said to the Baptist, as a continuation of what is expressly attributed to him in the 15th verse. But this is unimportant from the point of view herein taken; for the gospel is treated as expressing the opinions of the writer of the gospel, in a mythical form, in which we meet, in fact, only his own opinions symbolically expressed, the Law being treated as a living creature, its letter being represented by the Baptist, while its Spirit is represented by the Word and by Light, and again, as we shall see presently, by JESUS CHRIST, who is soon to take precedence over the Baptist, and speak in the name of the Law in both characters, flesh and blood.

In verse 17 we read that the Law was given by Moses, but [that] grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST.

This must be regarded as a declaration by the evangelist, whether said in his own person, as the writer of the gospel, or whether referred by him to the Baptist, as just intimated.

Let it be supposed here, that the writer of the gospel intended in this 17th verse to speak of persons; still, the interpretation is simple. He merely means to say that the Law, as written, was given by Moses; but that the Spirit of the Law, its grace and truth, was brought to light by JESUS CHRIST.

In the preceding Part, the personality of JESUS CHRIST is not denied. On the contrary, from a passage in Romans and another in Hebrews, it would seem as if the personality of JESUS is recognized.

In Romans xv. 8, St. Paul expressly refers to JESUS CHRIST as a Minister of the circumcision, while he assumes himself, in the same Epistle, to be a minister to the gentiles.

In the 3d chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, CHRIST JESUS is called "the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession;" that is, of the profession of the Hebrews—evidently a sect of the Jews, and not the Jewish nation. St. Paul speaks of himself as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, besides being of the tribe of Benjamin, and of the stock of Israel (Phil. iii. 5).

In the Epistle to the Hebrews JESUS is referred to as if he had been appointed to some commission, in the execution of which he had been "faithful," as was also Moses (Heb. iii. 2).

But while the two are thus spoken of together, the "man," CHRIST JESUS, "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house."

Here we have precisely the same mysticism we find in the gospel. The "house" is the Law, given by Moses; but the Spirit is the "builder" of the Law, and this is CHRIST JESUS, although he is a Builder in another sense also. JESUS, as a person, may here be understood as one who had brought to light, after it had slept perhaps for ages, the Spirit of the Law, its grace and truth; and because he had thus expounded the Law, his name subsequently became the symbol for the Spirit he taught.

CHRIST, as a person, was a minister of the circumcision—that is, a minister to the Jews: but CHRIST as the Spirit, is the Spirit of the Hebrew sacred Law, and not an historical person. He is the Light, the eternal Word, the Holy One of Israel, the Lord; and he is the ever-present Emmanuel or God-with-us.

In verse 18, it is said that no man hath seen God at any time—and this must be taken absolutely. No man hath *seen* God at any time; and we read in the Law, that no man shall see God's face and live.

Notwithstanding these declarations, we read that Moses talked with God face to face as one friend to another, and we find in the gospel of John that Christ is represented as saying, that whoever hath seen him hath seen the Father.

These passages cannot be reconciled from the literal point of view, but they are easily harmonized when the language is understood as figurative.

There is no sense so habitually used metaphorically as that of the sight. We apply it to the understanding almost as familiarly as to the natural eye. In every department of knowledge in which teachers are employed, nothing is more common than for the pupil to be asked if he *sees* what has been explained to him.

Christ is the Law: in the letter he is visible, but in the Spirit he is invisible, and to the uninitiated he is said to be unknown, as we shall see presently. But when the Spirit becomes known, then, metaphorically speaking, he is said to be seen; and as the Spirit is the Father of the letter, it is metaphorically said, that whoever hath seen the letter hath seen the Father also.

This will however be further explained as we proceed.

John, Ch. I. 19. ¶ And this is the record of John, when the Jews
sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who
20. art thou? 20. And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed,
21. I am not the Christ. 21. And they asked him,
What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not.
22. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22. Then
said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an
answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?
23. 23. He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet
24. Esaias. 24. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

We come now, in verses 19 to 24, to one of the scenes expressly introduced into the gospel for the purpose of showing that the Pharisees were ignorant of the Spirit; the Evangelist, at the same time, showing that the Letter, in the person of the Baptist, is not the Spirit. The Letter, speaking in the person of the precursor or forerunner of the Spirit, says expressly (verse 20), in answer to an inquiry proceeding from the Pharisees, I am not the Christ; and in verse 23, he is made to characterize the office of the letter as one crying in the wilderness [of life], Make straight the way of the Lord.

This is figurative language. The warning to make the way of the Lord *straight*, is a call to every one to live uprightly or righteously—this being essentially necessary before any one can "see" the Lord.

This is not a casual intimation of slight importance, but expresses the very essence of the problem of life.

The wicked, being false, cannot see the LORD of Truth. Hence, to prepare the way for seeing the Spirit, the letter is represented as crying in the wilderness, life being a wilderness without the truth, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our GOD—as it reads in the older Scriptures (Isa. xl. 3). Even in Isaiah this call is made immediately in connection with the declaration that "the Word of our GOD," which means the Word of the Law, "shall stand forever" (verse 8).

JOHN, CH. I. 25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why
baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias,
26. neither that prophet? 26. John answered them, saying, I
baptize with water; but there standeth one among you,
27. whom ye know not: 27. He it is, who coming after me, is
preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy
28. to unloose. 28. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

In verses 25 to 28, we meet with a farther indication of the doctrine of the Spirit, as coming after the letter; and its immeasurable importance in comparison with the letter is described with great force. After the letter, as the Baptist, is made, in verse 20, to deny being itself the Spirit, the characteristic symbol of the letter is indicated in verse 26, by the Baptist saying, I baptize with water—water being the symbol of the letter. He is then made to declare, There standeth one among you, whom ye know not: He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

After the explanations already made it seems needless to dwell upon these passages. The One, standing among the Pharisees whom they knew not, is the true Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, unknown to most men.

The humility of the Baptist in the presence of the unknown One, or the One unknown to the Pharisees, expresses the inferiority of the letter to the Spirit. It does not refer to an historical scene or person. It is pure symbolism, by which the evangelist, who saw the Spirit, expresses his sense of the majesty of the Holy One of Israel.

No one ever approached that Spirit without being awe-struck, and many are prostrated, as represented in the case of St. Paul. The effect of a realizing sense of the Spirit is described in the gospel of John where, as we read, chapter xviii. 6, those who were sent to arrest Jesus, when made sensible of his presence, "went backward and fell to the ground."

The prophet Isaiah sees the Spirit and exclaims, For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

This was not the prediction of the coming of an historical person; and those who imagine it was, ought to acknowledge that the prediction was not fulfilled in the personal Jesus; for the prophet continues, in the next verse—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. It is said, that the kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and is truly declared to be "forever." But such was not the throne of David, if he was an historical person. The simple truth is, in regard to this language, that the prophetic writings themselves are figurative and symbolical, and are by no means to be taken literally.

Malachi (chapter iii. 1–3) writes of the same Spirit, Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant [the Law], whom ye delight in: behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts, but who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

This passage has been considered prophetic of the Baptist, as the Messenger, &c.; but this reverses the truth. The evangelist has merely used as a figure in the gospel, that which he found already used in Malachi. The prophet himself speaks as the personified Law, the very same Law which is personified in the gospels. Speaking in the name of the Law, the prophet declares: Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts (chap. iii. 7). * * Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and the judgments (chap. iv. 4).

The relation of the Letter to the Spirit is referred to in so many ways in Scripture, that a knowledge of this relation is itself almost a key to the sacred writings. The Letter is the old covenant, the covenant of works; the Spirit is the new covenant, the covenant of grace. It is as Egypt is to the Holy Land or Land of Promise. It is as Hagar, the bond-woman, is to Sarah, the free-woman. The Law gendereth bondage, but the Spirit is free. The Letter is to the Spirit as Mount Sinai is to Mount Zion. To know this relation experimentally is to be born of water and the Spirit; and it is to eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood; and this, again, is to pass through the state which is symbolized by the sacrament of the supper, where the bread and wine represent the body and blood of Christ, who himself represents the Letter and Spirit of the Law. The Law, as written, stands related to grace or its spirit as duty is to love—duty looking forward to a reward in some indefinite future, whereas love carries its own reward with it. A labor of love is a labor of joy. Hence we read, that the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he [whose performance of a prescribed duty is a labor], (Luke vii. 28); and again, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God (Luke

xiv. 15), the Kingdom of God being a kingdom of truth and righteousness.

The Spirit is really first, but the Law precedes the coming of the Spirit to the phenomenal man; but when the Spirit comes, or when man comes to the Spirit, then, that which was first shall be last, and the last first.

There are a multitude of allusions of this kind in the Scriptures, all turning upon the preëminence of the Spirit over the written Law; while, nevertheless, the written Law contains the Spirit, of which it is said to be the witness; the Spirit, again, in its turn, becoming a witness to the letter. The condition for discovering the Spirit is everywhere declared to be obedience. By "doing" the Word, its effects become manifest, and prove that the Word is true, and truth is of God.

Obedience to the Law is expressed in many ways. It is called walking with the Lord, keeping the commandments to do them; it is to hearken to them, to be constant to do them, to walk in the path of the commandments, to delight in them; or, negatively, not to forsake them, not to wander from them; not to leave them, not to transgress them, &c.

We are considering a dramatic representation, or writing, designed to teach a secret society, or instruct the novitiates of the society, in the doctrine of the Law as twofold, Letter and Spirit. The Letter as visible is symbolized by water, and is represented by John the Baptist, who is said to baptize with water—thus indicating his symbolic character; but the Spirit is invisible, and is represented by Christ, who is said to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The Pharisees are exhibited as not "knowing" the invisible "One"—that is, they knew not the Spirit of the Law.

Before passing on in the further consideration of this subject, the author wishes to intimate that the *letter*, here interpreted in one sense, has another and a more profound signification, in which the Baptist, as *water*, becomes a figure for the universal Sea from which the ancient Venus was born—as the Light, again, coming after the water baptism. Man, as a child of Nature, is born to this water baptism; and as he passes through it, under the guidance of Virgil, as in Dante, he is finally led by the celestial Beatrice to the true light, the Paradise of the Italian poet.

We should seek in the great masterpieces for the universal in the particular. We cannot be said to understand these immortal works, until we discover the "steadfast" in the "variable."

But let us return to the 1st chapter of John.

There is a distinct meaning in verse 28, where we read that "These things [where the Baptist plays so important a part] were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." Jordan is the symbol of spiritual life, and the two sides of Jordan represent, one the letter, and the other the Spirit.

If we have dwelt at great length upon this portion of the 1st chapter of the gospel, it is because a right understanding of it is absolutely necessary for the interpretation of the remaining portion of the gospel: and not the gospel of John alone; for it will be found a useful instrument in faithful hands for understanding all four of the gospels and many other parts of Scripture—the student, as just intimated, being faithful himself.

John, Ch. I. 29. ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him,
and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the
30. sin of the world! 30. This is he of whom I said, After me
cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was be-
31. fore me. 31. And I knew him not: but that he should be
made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with
water.

In the 29th verse of the 1st chapter of John, the Spirit (of Truth) is introduced under the characteristic figure of the Lamb. John is represented as seeing JESUS "coming unto him," and he exclaims, Behold the Lamb of GOD, which taketh away the sin of the world. The Lamb is a symbol of innocence, and innocence is an attribute or property of truth. The previous declarations are repeated in verse 30, setting forth the supremacy of the Spirit over the Letter, of which no further interpretation is necessary.

The expression in verse 31, And I knew him not, is used by the Baptist, the representative of the letter; and it means that the letter, considered in itself, is blind, and without power. It is said repeatedly in the gospel to "do nothing of itself." I knew him not, in verse 29, has the same meaning as the last paragraph in verse 5, where we read that the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; though this may admit of another interpretation without any prejudice to the hypothesis taken in this work.

Man himself may be taken as a symbol of the Law, whose body contains a spirit, a Holy One, whom it knows not—an allusion which the student may expand at his pleasure, and it will be found very fruitful.

JOHN, CH. I. 32. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit
descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon
33. him. 33. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to
baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou
shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the
34. same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34. And
I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God.

In verse 32 we have another characteristic of the Spirit under the figure of a dove, which signifies truth; the first being innocence, signified by a lamb, as just explained.

The letter dramatically refers to the Spirit, as if the Spirit had sent the letter to bear witness of itself—the letter baptizing with water, but the Spirit with the Holy Ghost; and (verse 34) John, still speaking, is represented as bearing record that this is the Son of GOD.

The Spirit is thus introduced, personified for the purposes of the drama. JESUS is declared to be the Son of GOD, this designation applying to the Spirit of the Law, which, in its letter, is the Son of man.

It will be seen that in the gospel of John we have no account of a supernatural birth, as there is in Matthew and in Luke—Mark likewise introducing JESUS without any particulars of a supernatural birth. This is a mere matter of taste at the option of the writers, the four evangelists, each of them, giving a mythical and not a veritable history.

If the gospels are to be considered as so many actual histories, written by men inspired with a common knowledge of the same series of external facts, or legends of them, then, indeed, we might wonder why particulars so extraordinary as those recorded by Matthew and Luke in connection with the birth of Jesus, should be entirely overlooked by both Mark and John.

But the gospels are not histories. They are mythical representations, designed to teach the power of the Law in its spirit. Thus the Law, personified, can do no "mighty works" where there is no faith in the Law (Matt. xiii. 58). The same Law can do nothing of itself; but the Father, the Spirit, that is with it, "he doeth the works" (John xiv. 10, &c.).

John, Ch. I. 35. ¶ Again the next day after, John stood, and two of
36. his disciples; 36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked,
37. he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 37. And the two dis-
38. ciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38. Then
Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them,
What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say,
39. being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou? 39. He
saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where
he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the
40. tenth hour. 40. One of the two which heard John *speak*,
41. and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41.
He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him,
We have found the Messias; which is, being interpreted,
42. the Christ. 42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when
Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona:

thou shalt be called Cephas: which is, by interpretation, a
43. stone. 43. ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into
Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.
44. 44. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and
45. Peter. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him,
We have found him of whom Moses, in the law and the
prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.
46. 46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing
come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and
47. see. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of
48. him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48.
Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called
49. thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. 49.
Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the
50. Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. 50. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw
thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see
51. greater things than these. 51. And he saith unto him,
Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven
open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon
the Son of man.

The remaining portions of the 1st chapter of John, from verse 35, admit of explanation from the point of view taken by the author; but there is no need of following these verses with minute interpretations. They may be considered as merely a mode of assembling a few followers of the Spirit of Truth for dramatic purposes, though the author is of opinion they have quite another import. Not to leave them without at least an intimation of an inner sense, we will barely touch upon one or two points, which have special significance.

In Section XIII. of the preceding Part, the story of the two disciples going to Emmaus is interpreted precisely in accordance, as the author believes, with the design of the writer of the gospel; and he sees something in this portion of John's gospel analogous to the story in Luke.

The author has no wish to be fancifully minute in his interpretations, and is well aware of the facility with which a favorite theory may be strained beyond what it will bear. But we can hardly suppose that the Evangelist was without an object in the picture he presents in verses 35 to 37 inclusive. Let us recite again those three verses.

After indicating, in verses 29 to 34, two characteristics of the Spirit of Truth, John continues the history:

Verse 35. Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

It is not accidental or without design, that the Evangelist represents the Baptist as *standing*, and Jesus as *walking*. The Baptist represents the Letter; and it would be easy to collect many significant passages, some of which have already been indicated, to show that the Letter, Christ in the *flesh*, is, in itself, dead and powerless. It can "do nothing of itself." The Spirit that is with it, "he doeth the works." When asked, Who art thou? the answer is, "The same I told you from the beginning;" for, as a writing, the

Law always speaks one and the same language, and can make no explanations of itself. It does no "mighty works" in the soul where there is no belief in it, &c. Hence the Baptist, representing the Letter, is said in this scene to *stand*, because the object of the Evangelist requires it.

But the Spirit, as Life, is ever in motion. Life is in perpetual movement, and is never at rest. Therefore, in the scene we are considering, while the Baptist *stood*, he is said to have seen JESUS, "as he walked."

It affords some confirmation of this view of the passive character of the Baptist, to observe what is said of his eating and drinking by the four evangelists. Matthew (chapter iii. 4) says that his meat was locusts and wild honey, which is repeated by Mark. Whatever may be the meaning of this, it is impossible to receive it literally.

John says nothing whatever of his food or drink.

Luke (chapter viii. 33) says, that he "came neither eating bread nor drinking wine;" but does not tell us what he ate or drank, or whether he ate or drank any thing at all.

Bread and wine are peculiarly figurative words in the Scriptures, and the Baptist is here said to have come neither eating bread nor drinking wine: but the language of Matthew, in a second allusion to John in this respect, is more to the purpose; for he says (chapter xi. 18), that the Baptist "came neither eating nor drinking."

If there is any apparent contradiction in all this, it is a point for the literalists to adjust. To the author, upon his point of view, it is of no importance whether he is reported to have ate and drank or not, though the last citation from Matthew would be precisely in character for the *letter*, which neither eats nor drinks.

The two disciples are said to be disciples of the Baptist; which means that they were students of the Scriptures, represented by the Baptist. We may suppose them, like the two disciples going to Emmaus, communing in the Spirit of Truth upon the subject of the Scriptures and endeavoring to understand them. We may suppose them listening, as it were, in the spirit, to catch a whisper of the mysterious meaning of the sacred books; in pursuit, perhaps, of what is called *the secret of the Lord.* They wish to discover what the Scriptures really teach of the Messias, the Saviour, the Prince of Peace.

In this state they are said to have heard the Baptist exclaim, Behold the Lamb of GOD: and this means that they understood the Scriptures to signify, that a necessary attribute of Truth is innocence; or, that innocence is an indispensable qualification in one who would enter the kingdom of GOD.

Those who imagine that the sacrifice of the Lamb, which was to be "without blemish," as prescribed in the Law, was typical of the personal CHRIST whose history we have in the gospel, most certainly reverse the order of things. They fail to see not only the true teaching or signification of the Law, but fail also to see, that the gospel writers have merely used the Lamb as an emblem of innocence, because it was already provided to their hands in the Mosaic ceremonial Law.

To explain what is meant by the two disciples *hearing* the Baptist, we may observe that, in many places in Scripture, to *hear*, means to *understand:* as, in Mark iv. 24, Unto you that hear [that is, unto you that understand what you hear] shall more be given. And, again, the caution in Luke viii. 18, Take heed how ye hear:—that is, Be careful how ye understand what ye hear. In John vi. 60, the Pharisees are made to say, This is an hard saying, who can hear it:—that is, who can understand it. In John viii. 47, we read: He that is of GOD, heareth GOD'S words:—that is, he understands them: but the Pharisees, who were addressed, were said not to hear them:—that is, they did not understand them, because they were not of GOD: they did not understand the Law. Again, in John ix. 27, we read: I have told you already, and ye did not hear:—that is, the Pharisees, who were addressed, did not understand.

The two disciples, then, *heard*, that is, they understood the Scriptures, in what they say of the Messias, to mean something symbolized by the Lamb; and this is innocence.

We are not here considering a history. It is not that John the Baptist, as a person, *stood*, and saw another person, as he *walked*, and said, Behold the Lamb of GOD. Let us ourselves hear, that is, let us understand this from another point of view. We are not dealing with history, but with a mysterious symbolism designed to teach wonderful principles of a spiritual nature, the secret of which every man carries invisibly in himself.

The Hebrew sacred writings *stood*, as they now *stand;* and they witnessed, as they now witness, a certain Spirit of Life, which " walks unseen among us," and which is never at rest, although man attains to rest in it. This is the Light, to which the Baptist, as the Letter, testifies, or witnesses; but the Baptist is not the Light. This Light comes after the Letter, but is preferred before it, for it was before it.

We see two disciples of the Baptist; that is, in plain words, we see two students of the Hebrew sacred writings; and they *hear*, or *understand* them to declare the Messias, the Emmanuel or GOD-with-us, under a characteristic mark of the Spirit of Truth. They hear the Baptist say, Behold the Lamb of GOD; and they "follow" the Spirit of Truth under the name of JESUS—not a person, but a life-principle, ever-present in the world, but known only to a few; and who are the few? We are told that the secret of the LORD is with the righteous; and innocence is an attribute of the righteous, if we do not rather call it the principle of righteousness.

The language, There standeth one among you whom ye know not,—is addressed to all men in all time, who are not living in innocence and in the Spirit of Truth.

There were *two* disciples, as we read, going to

Emmaus; and in the chapter of John under consideration, there were *two* disciples, also, who *hear* the words, Behold the Lamb of God. We have thus far treated the record as if there were two persons in each case. But let us examine this matter a little further.

The number *Two* is scarcely less mysterious in Scripture than one. The first act of God, as we read in Genesis, was the creation of two things, the heaven and the earth. We read that Abraham had *two* wives; and Origen tells us very emphatically, not to consider this after the flesh; and St. Paul himself tells us in Galatians, that the story of Abraham and his two wives is an allegory. We see that Rebecca was told by the Lord, when she conceived, that she carried with her *two* nations.

Two, with one, make a trinity; and we have an exemplification of this in the body, soul, and spirit of man—the Spirit being the mysterious One, the "maker" of the *two* which, yet, are united in the one man. The Two, in man, nevertheless, do not know the One; no, not even when he comes "to his own" in the form of the Law, to make the One known.

The *two* disciples, then, may be but one man, whether going to Emmaus, as represented by Luke, or *standing* with the Baptist, as it is in John. We say, it may be so, for we do not care to insist upon this.

It may be that the divided nature of man, the *two* principles which St. Paul found struggling within himself, were represented as two disciples; and we see them seeking in the Scriptures the true meaning of those mysterious writings. Their eyes are said to have been holden in Luke at first; but, at length, the spirit of truth in themselves enables them to discover the Messias, the Truth, in the sacred Scriptures; and then their eyes are said to have been opened, and they go and declare what they have seen.

The same spiritual operation is shadowed out in John. The two disciples of the Baptist may be but one man of body and soul; at first disunited, lacking the "one thing needful," and seeking it in the Scriptures. As this one man "communes" with himself in a holy frame of mind, or with a single purpose, he hears a whisper, as coming from the Scriptures, telling him of a characteristic of the Messias. He *hears* the Baptist say, Behold the Lamb of GOD; and the Light, to which the Baptist testifies, dawns upon his heart. A mysterious sense of the truth passes over his soul, and he follows a principle, which not only brings his hitherto divided nature into harmony with itself, but into peace with the "High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity."

We do not wish to anticipate, but may suggest here, that we consider these two disciples of the Baptist, this one man of a double nature, to be no other than the author of the gospel himself, John the Evangelist, the loved disciple of the LORD; who, in this description, points at the commencement of his life in the LORD, which we shall see leads him to the mystical marriage, the consummation of a holy life, under the figure of his acceptance of the Mother of JESUS at the foot of the Cross, as his own Mother.

Let the reader hold this suggestion in reserve for the present, and he may find it abundantly confirmed by entering into the Spirit of this gospel, which will be seen to present a perfect unity of design in its entire composition from beginning to end.

We will return now to the text.

In the 45th verse we are told, indeed, that one of the two disciples was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother; but we are by no means obliged to consider the brotherhood here referred to as of the flesh. The spiritual nature of man is a family as multitudinous "as the stars of the heaven, or as the sand which is upon the sea-shore;" and yet this multitude constitute one only family—as in Plato's Republic. But this family dwells together "in peace and unity" only while they "follow" the Spirit of Truth. But this is to follow JESUS.

The first conception of the Truth to which any one attains, is compared in Scripture to finding a pearl of great price; and to a treasure hid in a field; as also to a mustard seed, the smallest of seeds: and it is called an angel, a messenger, a prophet. St. Paul compares it to an heir, at first a servant but destined to become the Lord of all.

It was not seen in the storm [the whirlwind of passion], but heard in the still small voice; and when that voice is heard by any spiritual element in man, it forthwith communicates itself to its spiritual brethren,—as we see it represented in both Luke and John. Thus, Andrew is said to find first his "own brother" Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. Jesus [the Truth] next passes to Philip, said to have been of the same *city* with Andrew and Peter; and then the news spreads still further and is expressed in the words, We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets did write. This is simply a mode of declaring that the Truth, the true Spirit of the Scriptures, had been discovered. By supposing Andrew and the rest to be one man, we may have here an illustration of the parable of the *leaven*, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

And to what does this lead? When the Spirit of Truth takes root in the soul it grows like all other things, and leads to the assurance that the vision of Jacob's Ladder may be realized. It promises the soul that, hereafter it shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man (John i. 51).

It by no means follows that because the Evangelist describes the Baptist as *standing*, in a particular scene, in order to exhibit the contrast between the Letter and the Spirit, that, therefore, the Baptist must be kept standing throughout the drama. Such a supposition would betray a total ignorance of the nature of symbolical and mythical writings, whose authors never confine themselves to historical rules or to what are called the unities in dramatic writing. In the gospels, the Law speaks as the Letter and also as the Spirit; and even the two address or invocate each other. Nothing of this kind will present the least difficulty to any one accustomed to interpret this species of writing.

The spirit of the Hebrew sacred writings cannot be seen expressly stated, in any single passage or even in any single portion of sacred writ; and yet a single passage, even, may suggest it to a contemplative spirit prepared to receive it. The author has no hope of pointing this out by express or textual references, and yet it may aid a considerate reader to call his attention to a few verses in Exodus, chapter xxx., commencing at verse 34:

34. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight:

35. And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together pure and holy:

36. And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee; it shall be unto you most holy.

Let the student now consider what this means. It is figurative language, and must not be understood literally. It refers to what is called the *testimony* in the Tabernacle; and the Tabernacle itself is a symbolic Temple, a Building not made with hands. By meditating upon this sacred history or rather picture, the spirit in man, as represented in John, finally hears or understands what sort of spices and frankincense must be laid up in the *heart* where the overruling Spirit is to commune with him. When the student really sees this, he puts on the mantle of Moses, and sees what he saw; and then he hears the Baptist very audibly pronounce, Behold the Lamb of God.

In the older allegory Pharaoh is the natural man living without the divine law. He is not guided by the Spirit of Truth, and comes into contact with manifold evils, each one of which becomes a Moses, warning him not to crucify the Lord. But he will not *hear*, till he reaches a "midnight" depression (Ex. xii. 29); and then the Spirit of God *passes over* him. He yields, and a "new year" commences. But the new-born man (Ex. xii. 2) has a variety of adventures before him, many of which are passed in the wilderness; for, although the principle of holiness may be received in an instant, in the "twinkling of an eye," it must have a natural growth, or the subject of it must have a natural growth under it, requiring time before old things pass away, and all things become new,—when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; that is, a transformed or changed idea of heaven, which is seen to rest on holiness, and not in the hope of a felicity assimilated to the joys of time; the sense of a new earth rising correspondingly in the soul, the burning lake being recognized as a figure only—a figure of the dreadful consequences of sin.

Before proceeding further it may be well to consider once more with special attention the true meaning of the relation of the Baptist to Christ. A true conception of this relation is indispensable to a right understanding of the Sacred Scriptures.

Here are two prominent figures introduced for the purpose of teaching a certain doctrine which, as we shall see, runs through the gospel. The importance of the representation cannot be seen so long as it is received merely as history. As history it is flesh without blood, and the language of Christ in a later chapter bears immediately upon it, warning us that we must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, or we have no life in us.

This is symbolical language. It can have no literal truth. We cannot eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ in any literal sense whatever. It was never intended that we should.

There are but few expressions in Scripture more misleading than those of eating and drinking, unless they are taken, as they should be, in a multitude of instances, in a metaphorical sense. To *eat bread and drink water*, of which we read so much in the Old Testament, has the same meaning as to eat flesh and drink blood in the New Testament, although in the Old as well as in the New Testament the water is often called wine, as in Proverbs ix. 5. Wisdom, meaning the wisdom of the Law, is represented as crying upon *the highest places of the city*, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled.

In Isaiah the two are called milk and wine, referring to the Scriptures which are called *waters*, the waters being both milk and wine, or flesh and blood as it is in John.

In Ecclesiasticus we have the same figurative language: They that eat me [says Wisdom personified] shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty; for there is no satiety in the acquisition of wisdom, which is here only another name for the Holy One of Israel, or the LORD; and this is the Spirit of the Law, or of the Hebrew sacred books,—the Law being referred directly to GOD as the Father.

A celebrated German critic on this subject, mistaking the expressions, eating and drinking, in the Old Testament, makes merry over the idea that the Jews saw God through the gastric sense! "When the seventy elders [says he] ascended the mountain with Moses, they saw GOD; and when they had seen GOD, they ate and drank. Thus with them what the sight of the Supreme Being heightened was the appetite for food." "Eating [says this author] is the most solemn act or the initiation of the Jewish religion." But this sneer was the result of not perceiving the mystical sense of the language.

Thus, again, another writer, making the same mistake, urges that Abraham "thought he had dined with

GOD;"—and means, by this, to indicate his extreme simplicity, excusing it on account of the ignorance of the age in which he lived.

But let us take this language in a figurative sense; let us seek to discover what it signifies, and we may find much reason to change the hasty judgment by which Moses, who gives this account, is classed among the simple of an imaginary primitive age. Let us eat and drink in the same sense that Abraham did, and we may understand the nature of the entertainment he is said to have given to angels!

Is it so very difficult to understand that by *manna* in the wilderness, is meant Heavenly Truth, with which the desert places in a parched soul are watered? Are we obliged to understand Isaiah literally in the language, Behold, I will even make a way in the wilderness (saith the LORD), and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give *waters* in the wilderness, and *rivers* in the desert, to give DRINK to my people, my chosen (ch. xliv. 19, 20).

Pythagoras is said to have expressed the principles of both religion and philosophy in the simple formula, ONE, TWO. What did he mean?

If we consider this matter closely we may discover that the Two is the Baptist, while the One is CHRIST.

Of course this is not said specifically in reference to the gospel, as a writing, which came after Pythagoras, and yet the gospel may express the very same principle which is embodied in the formula, ONE, TWO.

These are very simple words, but their meaning may not be the less profound on that account. They were designed to express the mystery of existence.

Philosophers tell us that the supposition of Two implies One; and this begins to be partially seen, when the two are conceived as *correlates* mutually supposing each other, in such a way as to indicate an original identity, the two being "made," so to say, by a mystical division of the one, into which they may be again finally resolved and then again reproduced. We may understand at once how the two imply each other by considering the nature of our perceptions.

Thus, to speak of the *seen*, implies that there is something *unseen*. But these two, conceived as the whole, or the "All" in the language of the old philosophers, seem to fill the conception of existence, which therefore is the one. But existence itself stands as a correlate to non-existence, even though the latter term expresses nothing positive, but is the negation of existence; for this very negation is as positive a conception as that of existence itself, the two terms implying something back of them, as it were, which is their unity in what is sometimes called Thought.

In a similar manner philosophers talk of the "me" and the "not me," neither of these expressions being what some of them call the absolute. They are two conditions implying each other; while the one is yet something prior to them, without which they could not be: yet neither can the one itself be conceived, but inasmuch as it is not two, which therefore is the correlate of the one.

In a similar way philosophers have discoursed of being and non-being; of the material and the immaterial; of the bodily and the spiritual,—as perhaps the son of Sirach saw these things when he wrote—All things are double, one against another: and he hath made nothing imperfect. One thing establisheth the good of another. Good is set against evil, and life against death; so is the godly against the sinner, and the sinner against the godly. So look upon all the works of the most High; and there are two and two, one against another.

If we carry this language so far as to speak of GOD as the One and yet conceive him apart from what is commonly called his work, that is, nature, we shall find that in the expressions GOD and nature we have the Two, but not the ONE, except in so far as these two are conceived as correlates again, leaving the one in fact still unexpressed; and yet a certain sense of the one remains in the consciousness, as necessarily antecedent to the two; and we may have the same consciousness, that the two may mutually pass into each other and be relatively destroyed without any destruction of the One which, as it was before the two, so must it survive them. In a relative sense the One may be said, now, to come after the two, and yet to be preferred before the two because it was before the two.

Let us now conceive the ONE, Two, as a universal formula, and apply it to the Law of Moses. The Law, as a writing, is manifestly on the *two* side of the formula; while it expresses nevertheless the one which comes after it but was before it. Call this One, the Word, the Light, and see it in the writing as if the writing was sent by the one to teach the way to itself; and then let us understand the teaching, as pointing the way to itself through certain attributes of itself under the figures of the Lamb and the Dove, and we may begin to see what John in the gospel means by these figures; the object being to bring out of the soul, as it were, its own inherent nature, and not to carry any thing strange or foreign from without into the soul: for man is not brought into unity by following the lead of another, which is a "bondage," but by following the Spirit of Truth in himself, or by verifying the directions from without by the witness of the Spirit within.

Hence the outward directions, as seen in the Law, occupy the subordinate position, and are well compared in the gospel to a servant, the initiates being carefully warned to "remember that the servant is not greater than his Lord;" for the servant is the Letter. It is symbolized by water, and is represented by the Baptist; but the One is symbolized by fire, and is represented by Christ: so that in the Law, and the Spirit of the Law, we have, by changing the order of the terms, the One, Two, of Pythagoras.

There is no design by what is here said, to explain the nature of the One, but only to suggest examples of the double nature of our conceptions. The reader may at his pleasure carry forward the enumeration, and may be surprised, upon trial, to perceive how far it may be extended. Thus, we have man, as a unity of body and soul; and in man himself we may see how the passions and affections are conceived as double; as, love and hate, hope and fear, joy and sorrow, pride and humility, &c.; and in each case we see how the idea of one is in some sort defined by means of the other, and this, to such an extent, that but for one we should not know the other.

In all cases, while the two presuppose the one, when the one finds expression it is no longer one but two, and yet the two cannot be but by virtue of the one which both precedes and follows the two.

The One therefore stands related to the two, as the unchangeable Deity is related to manifold existence,—One, Two, being the symbols of GOD and nature, the union of these making a mystical Trinity which is also the unity; for nature always returns to its source, where it is not lost but reproduced; and yet this operation itself is not life, but the manifestation of life: but, to what is it manifested except to itself?

The author understands very well that he is not explaining the nature of things by these self-evolving principles. He only desires to suggest to the reader some points by which the formula of the famous symbols of ONE, TWO, may be supposed to have gained consideration in the world; though he is of the opinion that the identical relation of the One to the Two, is that of CHRIST to the Baptist; or, in other words, it is that of the Spirit to the Letter, which, as applied in explanation of the gospel, is seen in the Hebrew sacred Law.

In other words, those who wrote the gospels saw (metaphorically speaking) a certain truth, or spirit, as life, in the older Hebrew books; and wrote the gospels under the influence of the same Spirit for the purpose of expounding the older books: but, from the nature of the case, the same Spirit is necessary now for the interpretation of the gospels which was necessary when they were written for understanding the Law, or the prophetic writings, themselves standing upon the Law.

Notwithstanding the above remarks, seemingly made for the explanation of a mystery, the author wishes to express the opinion, that on this subject there is something which refuses to be enclosed in a writing, except, indeed, as life is said to be enclosed in the Law; and yet life is not in the Law or is not seen in the Law except it be first in the student.

To what purpose then, it may be asked, was the Law written? Let the answer be taken from the gospel of John (ch. xviii. 37), To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

This is universally understood as if said by a person, and of himself as a person; but according to the hypothesis used in this work the gospel is a writing, in which Christ is not a person but a representative being or personification, and he represents the Law and speaks in its name. We must see in the language here imputed to Christ the precise character attributed by the Evangelist to the Baptist himself in the 1st chapter. The Baptist is declared to be a witness of a certain Light, but is not the Light itself. The Light is the Truth, and the Truth is the Life.

In the drama, Christ, as the Law, is supposed to be under trial, before Pilate, and the author of the gospel attributes to him language descriptive of his character, assimilating him, in character, to the Baptist; for these two are mysteriously one.

The language or assertion, that every one that is of the Truth heareth the voice of Christ, has the same meaning as the passage in chapter viii. 47, He that is of God heareth God's words [which means, that he that is of the Truth understands the Law], for Christ's *words*, referred to in John xviii. 37, are not the recorded words in the gospel, which are comparatively few, but they are the words of the Law, which Christ represented, and these are called in John viii. 47, God's words.

The author means to indicate, in all this, that although the gospel is, in some sense, an interpretation of the older Law, it is but water so long as it is seen as a Letter. It is John the Baptist to the modern reader; and in order to understand it the same Spirit of Truth is required which the gospel writers had need of in understanding the older writings, the writings themselves being, on the side of the Pythagorean formula, represented by Two, the One being the Light or Truth or Life, which was before the writings, whilst the writings, at best, can but witness the Truth, —the very character assumed by Christ himself, as just shown.

To reach the Truth the student must not depend upon the writings alone, but must go to the writings themselves in a certain Spirit [of Truth], by the light of which the light in the writings will be seen, or become manifest; and this is the manifestation of Christ (John xiv. 21).

No one ought to imagine that with these views the author supposes that his own writings can be any thing but instrumental. He proposes them for no other purpose than to aid, it may be, a certain class of students who may be conscious of a desire to see the truth, freed from its dependence upon all external aids, in which the writings shall not lose their value, but shall have their true value duly estimated by the discovery of a sure measure for them.

For this purpose, the author would again urge the importance of coming to some understanding of the relation of the Baptist to Christ. If this cannot be discovered, it is useless to pursue this examination from the hypothesis of the author.

If we look to nature, and ask the meaning of this relation, a response, more or less near the mark, may come up from several points of view; for, although the truth may be one in itself, it is manifold in its expression in nature.

We first see in nature what is called the heaven and the earth; the visible, tangible earth, and the blue expanse above and around it; the latter formerly seen as a firmament above altogether, and probably imagined as having waters both above and beneath the firmament. Here are *two* things: the blue sky above, and the *brown* earth beneath—figured in a celebrated mystical work, but little understood, by "two boys, beautiful as day, in colored jackets, which you might have taken for outer shirts,"—one of the boys having *blue* eyes, the other *brown* hair.*

In these two boys we have an *image* of the IMAGE in Genesis; and we may easily see these two as representing what are called matter and spirit, or material and spiritual existence. They are seen again in every living thing in the universe as body and soul.

The view of the two is brought immediately home to every human being in his own double nature. Every child of humanity comes into being, as it were, between the earth and the sky, and has a nature partaking of two constituents, called body and soul.

We see every child of man prefigured in the story of John in the wilderness, "bearing testimony to a higher nature." That higher nature is some form of development in which the spirit manifests itself. The sensuous nature of man, no matter how highly cultivated, no more knows the spirit than does John in the spiritual allegory know the "Light" which comes after him, expressed in the language, "I knew him not" (John i. 31).

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* Vide Meister's Travels, Chapter 1st.

In a similar sense this is true of the Law of Moses. It was "sent" to make known or "declare" the Spirit, which, nevertheless, is not directly seen in the Letter. The Letter veils the truth for reasons which become understood when the soul realizes the truth in itself. This realization of the truth is compared to a birth, and is called a new birth. It is symbolized in several ways—among others, as already stated, by a passage over or through Jordan—and was celebrated in ancient times by the feast of the Passover. It is a mysterious passing over of the natural to the spiritual man, involving a certain renunciation, which appears in the gospel in the passages commanding self-denial.

It is not without meaning that John is represented as baptizing "beyond Jordan" (John i. 28); for the Baptist, as the Letter, does not pass over Jordan. So neither did Moses pass into the Holy Land, in the very same sense; for the true spirit is free, and is not under the "bondage of the Law"—that is, it is not under the written Law: but it lives in the principle, the light, the life which is the father of the written Law.

If we cannot recognize the meaning of these ancient representations, to what purpose do we read them? We should seek their true sense, and then we shall understand what it is to turn water into wine.

We shall have constant occasion to refer to the Passover, and we make these remarks to prepare the reader for it, and to ask him to be patient with repetitions, the object of which is to walk the more warily over what is admitted to be sacred ground.

We have dwelt the longer upon the 1st chapter of John, because by a right understanding of this we shall the more readily understand the remaining chapters.

JOHN, CHAPTER II.

We will now pass to the 2d chapter of John; but shall in this and the succeeding chapters notice only such portions as may seem especially to require exposition.

The gospel is a divine drama, and many portions of it are manifestly introduced for the purpose of carrying on the action, or to make occasions for giving special instruction. We ought not to seek for an obscure and hidden sense for the purpose of exercising our ingenuity; for although the truth is profound, in one sense, we are told to search for it in a spirit of innocence and simplicity; which spirit will be found to be reflected back from the sacred writings, whose beauty will then begin to be understood and properly prized.

John, Ch. II. 1. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of
2. Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. 2. And both
3. Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3. And
when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him,
4. They have no wine. 4. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what
5. have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. 5. His
mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto
6. you, do *it*. 6. And there were set there six water-pots of
stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, con-

7. taining two or three firkins apiece. 7. Jesus saith unto
them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them
8. up to the brim. 8. And he saith unto them, Draw out now,
and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.
9. 9. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was
made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants
which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called
10. the bridegroom, 10. And saith unto him, Every man at
the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men
have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast
11. kept the good wine until now. 11. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his
12. glory; and his disciples believed on him. 12. ¶ After this
he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his
brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not
many days.

The 2d chapter of the gospel according to John opens with what is called (verse 11) the first, or "beginning" miracle wrought by Jesus in Cana of Galilee.

The Spirit of Truth having been brought upon the scene in the 1st chapter under two characteristics, innocence and truth, figured by the Lamb and the dove, is very properly first seen in *his* power of changing the water, or the Letter of the Scriptures, into wine or spirit—as this "beginning" miracle is interpreted by Origen, St. Augustine, and many other Fathers of the Church.

When any one recognizes the truth of the Essene view, that of the Spirit, its first effect is to throw a new character over the letter of the Scriptures, which become, so to say, transparent, showing the Spirit through the Letter. It is changed from water into wine.

This is what is called in Ezekiel (chapters ii. iii.), eating "the roll of a book;" which then becomes as "honey in the mouth." The book is seen to be written "within and without;" or to have an internal and an external sense.

This "honey" may be of several varieties, and no one should be in haste to determine its character, but we should rather conclude that a thing about which men have written so obscurely, must be something of a most peculiar nature, not to be easily understood. The great Teacher has told us that "few" enter in by the straight gate (Matt. vii. 14).

The author will not dwell upon this point, but thinks he cannot do less than suggest it, that if any one enters upon this inquiry in a presumptuous spirit, he may not charge his error upon the author. Let him rather search for the meaning of the language—Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.

John, Ch. II. 13. ¶ And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus
14. went up to Jerusalem, 14. And found in the temple those
that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of
15. money, sitting: 15. And when he had made a scourge of
small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the
sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money,
16. and overthrew the tables; 16. And said unto them that
sold doves, Take these things hence: make not my Father's
17. house an house of merchandise. 17. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath
eaten me up.

The first act of the Spirit of Truth, as represented by John, being that of changing the Letter into Spirit, the second is recorded in verses 13 to 17 of the 2d chapter, and is that of driving out of the temple its mercenary spirit,—symbolized by the scene representing Jesus as driving out of the temple those that sold "oxen, and sheep, and doves"—the symbols of patience, and innocence, and truth,—virtues of priceless value, and which can neither be purchased nor sold: "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." "He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen,"—that is, he drove out those who sold the doctrine of truth, and the *kind* of doctrine they sold also. Thus we read in the Acts (chapter viii. 20), Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Truth is called the gift of God, and was supposed to be given in the gift of the Law. The Spirit of Truth is therefore represented as driving out of the temple those who make religion an article of merchandise, and convert the sacred office of a teacher into that of a peddler. Not but that "the laborer is worthy of his hire;" but the laborer in the cause of truth, must make truth his object, and not the hire, or worldly profit he is to derive from it. The claim of a teacher to support was recognized in the old Law by the command (Deut. xxv. 4), Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn,—as this command was interpreted by St. Paul (1 Cor. ix. 9), with the significant question, Does GOD take care for oxen? Corn is the Truth, seen in the chaff of the Letter.

JOHN, CH. II. 18. ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him,
What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these
19. things? 19. Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy
20. this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20. Then
said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in build-
21. ing, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? 21. But he
22. spake of the temple of his body. 22. When therefore he
was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he
had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture,
and the word which Jesus had said.

With respect to such passages as seem prophetic, it is sufficient to remark that the writer must be supposed to have had in his mind the whole of the contemplated drama at the commencement, and had the power to record prophetic allusions at his pleasure. The "Scripture," referred to in verse 22, is the Scripture of the Old Testament, to induce a *belief* in which was one object of the gospel; yet not a mere belief in its Letter, but in its Spirit, here represented as speaking.

JOHN, CH. II. 23. ¶ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover,
in the feast-*day*, many believed in his name, when they saw
24. the miracles which he did. 24. But Jesus did not commit
25. himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, 25. And
needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew
what was in man.

To believe in JESUS because of the "miracles which he did," as expressed in the 23d verse, means to believe in the divinity of the Law, when its power in the soul is witnessed. In chapter xiv. CHRIST appeals to the works of the Law or of the Hebrew sacred writings, in the same sense.

The same "works" at the present day, referred to the Bible as a whole, including the New Testament, furnish the same evidence to the believing soul. It is called the witness of the Spirit. The proposition at the present day may be thus expressed: The Bible is divine, else it could not "work the works" of the Father in the soul of man.

That JESUS is said to have known what was in man, is only a declaration of the exalted character of the Spirit of the Law, which is mystically called the Word, the Light, and the Life; and also the Son of GOD.

JOHN, CHAPTER III.

John, Ch. III. 1. There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus,
2. a ruler of the Jews: 2. The same came to Jesus by
night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a
teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles
3. that thou doest, except God be with him. 3. Jesus answered
and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of
4. God. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be
born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his
5. mother's womb, and be born? 5. Jesus answered, Verily,
verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and
of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
6. 6. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which
7. is born of the Spirit, is spirit. 7. Marvel not that I said
8. unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8. The wind bloweth
where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but
canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is
9. every one that is born of the Spirit. 9. Nicodemus answered
and said unto him, How can these things be?
10. 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master
11. of Israel, and knowest not these things? 11. Verily, verily,
I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that
12. we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12. If I
have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall
13. ye believe if I tell you *of* heavenly things? 13. And no
man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down
from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.
14. 14. ¶ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,
15. even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15. That whosoever
believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal
16. life. 16. ¶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should
17. not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. For God sent not
his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the
18. world through him might be saved. 18. ¶ He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is
condemned already, because he hath not believed in the
19. name of the only begotten Son of God. 19. And this is the
condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men
loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were
20. evil. 20. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light,
neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.
21. 21. But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light,
that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought
in God.

The teaching in the 3d chapter of John to the 21st verse inclusive, seems addressed entirely to Nicodemus; who is represented as a ruler of the Jews and a Pharisee.

It will be seen, that the first several chapters of John's gospel represent JESUS as in intercourse, and mostly in controversy with the Pharisees; the object of which is to show or illustrate their ignorance of the Scriptures.

We do not treat the gospel as a history, but as a drama; and the drama is simply a mode of teaching, addressed to the Essenes, or to the initiates of some secret society. This is the hypothesis on which we are proceeding.

Nicodemus is introduced to represent a well-disposed Pharisee who is ignorant of the Essene view. Ignorance is represented by night; and thus Nicodemus is said to have gone to JESUS by *night.* His address to JESUS (verse 2) is dramatically introduced, to indicate the reflection of a Jew upon the power of the Law, as seen in its effects upon those who believed in it. These effects were so striking that Nicodemus seems convinced that they could only be accounted for or explained, by the supposition that GOD was with the Law. Not that such an opinion was actually expressed by any Pharisee; but the writer of the gospel put forward a Pharisee artistically to represent a certain opinion of his own—that the Pharisees were ignorant of the Spirit of the Law.

It may be well to keep in mind the order of development thus far, after enunciating the proposition, as it may be called, in the first five verses of the first chapter.

First, John the Baptist appears, representing the Letter of the Law, signified by his water-baptism. He is the forerunner, or witness of the Life, invisibly borne in himself, which Life was the Light of men (John i. 4); that is, in the language of the Psalmist, it was a lamp to their feet, and a light unto their path. He testifies of the Spirit, which appears upon the theatre of action under the symbols of Innocence and Truth, signified by the Lamb and the Dove.

The Spirit, being now upon the stage, appropriately signalizes *his* power, first, by turning the Letter into Spirit, and, then, by driving the mercenary Spirit out of the Church.

We now find *him* instructing a Pharisee in the doctrine of the new-birth. We must consider that an Essene, sworn to secrecy, is speaking mysteriously of a Pharisee; and he is represented as telling him of the necessity of being born again—that he must be born of water and the Spirit, or he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD. This is a kingdom of righteousness, as taught in the LAW, which is therefore called the Word of the kingdom in the parable of the Sower, as recorded by Matthew.

Very naturally, Nicodemus is represented as not understanding this mysterious language, uttered without explanation. As it was not understood then, so neither is it now understood in the external Church, except by scattered individuals, who reach it by the aid of the Spirit rather than through the instrumentality of the Church.

As explained in the 3d section of Part First of this work, the language to Nicodemus means that, as the Jews were born under the Law, prescribing their duties in life, with artificial sanctions not in accordance with the law of nature, it was necessary to understand the true reason of the Law [that is, the Spirit of the Law], before the obedience required of them could be rendered with freedom.

The Law was supposed to be founded in wisdom, but its sanctions were artificial. It did not "rain" among the Jews, *because* the Jews obeyed the Law in not removing their neighbors' "land-mark;" and yet it was right that the neighbors' land-mark should not be removed; and so for other laws.

The kingdom of GOD is a state of innocence, truth, and righteousness; and the "end" or object of the

Law was to induce or produce this state; or a state of justice and charity, as the sum of all excellencies.

So long as the Spirit, the CHRIST of the Law, is not recognized, the Law remains as a master, commanding obedience with authority, and with artificial sanctions; but when it has produced its designed effect in the soul, we shall see that it is no longer a master, but becomes a "friend," and finally it "vanishes," as in Luke xxiv. 31; or, it is "left behind," as in the case of St. Paul.

Therefore CHRIST teaches Nicodemus the necessity of being born of water *and* the Spirit, before he can "see" or "enter" the kingdom of GOD; that is, before he can become "free."

That this state is not the result of mere written or verbal teaching, is indicated in the 8th verse: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The truth of this may be seen to some extent by observing the operation of the mind in the process of attaining any truth whatever, even a mathematical truth. The student being in a proper state for its reception, the truth comes into the mind, not by an act of the will, but by what may be called a grace. It is not otherwise in perceiving the truth, the Spirit of the Law. Hence it is called the gift of GOD—as the Law itself is the gift of GOD.

This 8th verse has been much overstrained in religious discussions. According to one view, man has absolutely nothing to do in "working out his salvation," since the Spirit comes or not, wholly at the will of God, which is usually supposed to be exercised arbitrarily. In another view, man, it has been said, may do any thing he pleases, following his own blind passions: and the same reason is given; that, if he belongs to the "elect," his own conduct can make no difference in his fate. The doctrine of the 8th verse is announced in the form of a simile; and the comparison is to the wind, which is said to blow as it listeth. But the wind is known to be under absolute laws, as unchangeable as the nature of God. It is only said to blow as it listeth, in reference to our ignorance of its laws of motion; and this may be equally true of the Spirit, which, as we read elsewhere, will enter if we "open the door."

It is true that the Saint and the Sinner both act without regard to consequences; but whilst the Saint acts in obedience to the Divine Law (or its Spirit), the Sinner obeys only his blind passions.

We may observe, though without attaching particular importance to it, that Nicodemus is made in the 2d verse to refer to the "miracles" of Christ, as if he had performed many, while John, as yet, has recorded but one—that at Cana of Galilee.

No man (verse 13) hath ascended up to Heaven, but [the Law], which, in its Spirit, came down from Heaven, and provides or prescribes the means by which its followers may "enter" Heaven; that is, may enter into Truth, for Truth is Heaven. But in order to this (verse 14), it is necessary that the Son of man should be lifted up—which means, that the Law must be conceived as divine; and then (verse 15), those who believe in it, obedience being implied, shall not perish, but have eternal life.

To "perish" in Scripture, does not mean to die physically, for all men die; but it means to sin: for sin imprisons the soul; and in shutting it out from innocence shuts it out from truth, and thus from Heaven or the kingdom of God.

Of the several references to life, eternal life, everlasting life, &c., met with in Scripture, we must remark that eternal life is not to be understood in the sense of endless duration, a long or very long-continued existence, which might or might not be a blessing. Neither life nor eternity can be measured by duration.

A conscious soul cannot receive a promise of eternal life from without; for an external promise of life itself must be both made and imagined, with all its sanctions or testimonies, *in time;* and from a time stand-point eternity cannot be conceived. Eternal life, therefore, as this expression is used in Scripture, must be understood as the kingdom of heaven, and this is not a place but a state of the soul. It is sufficient, in our incipient studies, to consider it a state in contrast, not to physical death, which is appointed for us all, but to sin, or the moral death, which excluded Adam from the garden of Eden.

Paradise, the garden of Eden, and the garden of God, are only other names for life, eternal life, and everlasting life; and these again mean the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God—the Word of the kingdom being the Law, the Word of God, or simply the Word.

If we consider Christ as the way to life, he is also the resurrection and the life. For the present, let us keep in mind the attributes under which the Baptist testifies of him, as already pointed out, and we may have a better conception of the kingdom of heaven than by imagining a place of felicity under any commonly-received definition of this word.

In short, the desire of heaven, and the desire of being worthy of or fit for heaven, may express with accuracy the two baptisms, the baptism by water and that by fire.

The "only begotten Son" (verse 16) is the Law, which God is said to have given that those who believe in the Law, obedience being implied, might have everlasting life: for (verse 17) the Law was not sent into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved—saved from sin; and safety from sin, predicated of a conscious soul, is what is meant by everlasting life.

To believe in the Law (verse 18), obedience being supposed, is a security against condemnation. Condemnation is said, in verse 19, to result from disbelief; but disbelief is used as equivalent to disobedience; because the light, that is, the Law, having come into the world, men have not availed themselves of it, but have loved darkness, or ignorance, because their deeds were evil: the doers of evil (verse 20) hating the Law, because, in condemning evil, it condemns them: but (verse 21) he that doeth truth cometh to the Law, by which his (good) deeds are sanctioned, and are shown to have proceeded from the spirit in which the Law itself was written—by which it is proved that they are "wrought in God;" that is, in the Spirit of Truth.

John, Ch. III. 22. ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them,
23. and baptized. 23. ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and
24. they came, and were baptized. 24. For John was not yet cast into prison.

In the 22d and 23d verses of the 3d chapter, it is stated that both John and Jesus baptized, though some reader of this gospel seems to have made a gloss upon verse 2 of the 4th chapter, to the effect that Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples. From the view taken in this work there is no occasion to dwell upon such passages.

As a person Jesus might have baptized, though the mode and manner of baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire are not stated. As the Spirit of Truth, we may suppose that he did not baptize at all—as the annotator upon the 4th chapter evidently thought, and hence the gloss at verse 2.

The Baptist is said to be cast into prison (verse 24) when his spirit is denied. The beheading of the Baptist, recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, has a similar meaning. It resulted from the condemnation of the sin of Herod; and he is said to have beheaded the Baptist—meaning that the Law is denied by those whom the Law condemns.

John, Ch. III. 25. ¶ Then there arose a question between *some* of
26. John's disciples and the Jews, about purifying. 26. And they
came unto John and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with
thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the
27. same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him. 27. John answered
and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be
28. given him from heaven. 28. Ye yourselves bear me witness,
that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.
29. 29. He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom: but the friend
of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth
greatly, because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy
30. therefore is fulfilled. 30. He must increase, but I *must* decrease.
31. 31. He that cometh from above is above all: he
that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth:
32. he that cometh from heaven is above all. 32. And what
he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth
33. his testimony. 33. He that hath received his testimony,
34. hath set to his seal that God is true. 34. For he
whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God
35. giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.* 35. The Father
loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand.
36. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and
he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the
wrath of God abideth on him.

In verses 25 to the close of the 3d chapter, there is a repetition of the distinction between the Letter and the Spirit in the relation of the friend to the bridegroom; the Baptist comparing himself to the friend (verse 29), rejoicing at the coming of the Spirit; and he adds (verse 30), that the bridegroom must increase, but that he himself must decrease.

This means that when the Spirit comes to any one it increases, as a tree from a seed, while the importance of the Letter must decline. This has the same meaning as the passages in the 1st chapter, where the Light, of which the Baptist is the witness, is said to be preferred before the Baptist.

In these closing verses of the 3d chapter we also see the independence of the Spirit set forward, as coming from "above;" although the word "above" is not used in a physical sense—inward and outward, in a spiritual sense, answering to above and below in a physical sense.

To "see life" (verse 36) has the same meaning as the language, to "see the kingdom of GOD," addressed to Nicodemus in the 3d verse of this chapter, where it is connected with the doctrine of the new birth. It is, in verse 36, only another form of asserting the same doctrine.

JOHN, CHAPTER IV.

John, Ch. IV. 1. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees
had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than
2. John, 2. (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)
3. 3. He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.
4. 4. And he must needs go through Samaria.

The first verse of the 4th chapter of John's gospel would seem to recognize, not merely two persons in one Christ, but two distinct individuals in the Lord and Christ. When the Lord, as one person, knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus, as another person, made and baptized more disciples than John, &c.

The language, when he knew, intimates that he had not known from the first, but had obtained the knowledge at a certain time, *when*, &c.

In other places in the gospel, Christ is represented as knowing things unknown to those around him; but such allusions were introduced, we may suppose, for dramatic purposes. They serve to indicate the exalted character of the Spirit, whose shoe's latchet the Baptist is not worthy to unloose.

That Christ should be said to know in one sense what he does not know in another, is more easily explained on the supposition of his representative character as the Law, than on the supposition of a person. As the Letter of the Law, Christ neither knows, nor sees, nor does any thing of himself; but as the Spirit he is said to know what is in man, &c. As a person, there can be no propriety in attributing to him a double consciousness—a human and a divine nature.

John, Ch. IV. 5. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is
called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave
6. to his son Joseph. 6. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus
therefore being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the
7. well: *and* it was about the sixth hour. 7. There cometh a
woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her,
8. Give me to drink. 8. (For his disciples were gone away
9. unto the city to buy meat.) 9. Then saith the woman of
Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest
drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews
10. have no dealings with the Samaritans. 10. Jesus answered
and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who
it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have
asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.
11. 11. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to
draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast
12. thou that living water? 12. Art thou greater than our
father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof
13. himself, and his children, and his cattle? 13. Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water,
14. shall thirst again: 14. But whosoever drinketh of the water
that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that
I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing
15. up into everlasting life. 15. The woman saith unto him,
Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither
16. to draw. 16. Jesus saith unto her, Go call thy husband,
17. and come hither. 17. The woman answered and said, I
have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said,
18. I have no husband: 18. For thou hast had five husbands,
and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: in that
19. saidst thou truly. 19. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I

20. perceive that thou art a prophet. 20. Our fathers wor-
shipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is
21. the place where men ought to worship. 21. Jesus saith
unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye
shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship
22. the Father. 22. Ye worship ye know not what: we know
23. what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23. But the
hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall
worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father
24. seeketh such to worship him. 24. God *is* a Spirit: and they
that worship him, must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.
25. 25. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh,
which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all
26. things. 26. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee
am *he*.

From verse 5 to 26 the teaching seems exclusively addressed to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well.

If we were looking at this story as a history we might perhaps ask for the witness to this scene, as also to that with Nicodemus in the 3d chapter. But from the point of view herein assumed, no witness is necessary.

The story of the woman at the well was introduced in order to repeat in still another form the doctrine, that the Spirit is superior to the Letter, the Letter being represented by Jacob's well, whilst the Spirit is called *living water*.

This is so plain, after what has been said, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it; but there are several verses which express peculiar doctrines or teachings.

The gift of God referred to in the 10th verse, is the Law; for the Law was regarded as the free gift of God. If the woman had "known" the Law, she would have understood that the inward yearnings after "drink," or spiritual life, is the very spirit to be inquired of; for that is the spirit which told her all that she ever did—her own life-Spirit, which is also the gift of GOD.

The woman (verse 11) sees nothing with which CHRIST can draw water. This intimates that the spiritual truth of the Letter is not reached by means of direct visible aids. The soul that receives the truth, as it is in GOD, has no need of external or visible instruments. It lives in a communion of the Spirit with GOD, and understands what is meant by the language of the 8th verse of the 3d chapter. The wind bloweth as it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. The Spirit, as eternal, has neither commencement nor ending; and thus he who possesses it, may be said to know not whence it comes or whither it goes.

In verses 13 and 14, the two waters, the Letter and the Spirit, are contrasted; and we are told that whoever depends upon the Letter, shall still need the Letter; whereas, whoever receives the Spirit of Truth is said to drink of a "well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The reference to the *five* husbands (verse 18), has been supposed to point to the five books of the Law, from the Spirit of which the woman, by some supposed to signify the Church, is said to have departed—living in some other doctrine than is therein taught.

"Ye worship ye know not what" (verse 22), seems to refer to the ignorance of the true nature of worship in those who drink of the water of Jacob's well, that is, the Letter.

In verse 24, we have the sublime doctrine, that God is a Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

This doctrine expresses that, to a soul in a right state, there is nothing between it and God.

Here the reader might well be requested to pause, and consider the true import of the teaching; but the subject is left without comment for his own meditations.

The woman (verse 25) is made to exhibit the sensuous expectation of a person, as Christ; and then (verse 26) the Essene teacher shows that he who teaches the true doctrine of worship, as declared (verse 24), is the Messias, who comes to the true worshipper in the Spirit. A person may declare this doctrine, but the Spirit of Truth only can receive or understand it.

John, Ch. IV. 27. ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled
that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What
28. seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? 28. The
woman then *left her water-pot*, and went her way into the
29. city, and saith to the men, 29. Come, see a man which
told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?
30. 30. Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.
31. 31. ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying,
32. Master, eat. 32. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat
33. that ye know not of. 33. Therefore said the disciples one
to another, Hath any man brought him *aught* to eat?
34. 34. Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him
35. that sent me, and to finish his work. 35. Say not ye, There
are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say

unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they
36. are white already to harvest. 36. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice to-
37. gether. 37. And herein is that saying true, One soweth,
38. and another reapeth. 38. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

In verse 28 we read that the woman, on departing from Jacob's well, "left her water-pot, and went her way into the city." This is a counterpart to the declaration in verse 11, that she saw nothing with which Christ could draw water: for this verse, 28, intimates that the woman, having received the Spirit, has no further use for her water-pot, which represents the Letter, —the Letter, which St. Paul compares to a schoolmaster who is dismissed when he has taught his lesson. This same Letter St. Paul calls *Christ in the flesh*, leaving it "behind" after obtaining the Spirit.

Verse 34 expresses the joy of the Spirit in doing the will of God. This is the *meat* which the world knows not of.

Verses 37 and 38 refer to the existence of the Law, as the labor of others in past ages for the benefit of succeeding generations. One soweth and another reapeth.

John, Ch. IV. 39. ¶ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified,
40. He told me all that ever I did. 40. So when the Samaritans were come unto him they besought him that he would
41. tarry with them: and he abode there two days. 41. And
42. many more believed, because of his own word; 42. And

said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Verses 39 to 42 intimate different sources of belief in the Law. Some believe from the testimony of others, as to the effect of the Law; some from the declarations of the Law itself, that is, from a reading of the Law, by which its character becomes known as the Saviour of the world; for the Law saved from sin those who "abided" in it. Isaiah speaks of the Law as a Saviour from generation to generation—referring to the Holy One of Israel as the Spirit of the Law.

John, Ch. IV. 43. ¶ Now after two days he departed thence, and
44. went into Galilee. 44. For Jesus himself testified, that a
45. prophet hath no honour in his own country. 45. Then
when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him,
having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the
46. feast: for they also went unto the feast. 46. So Jesus
came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water
wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was
47. sick at Capernaum. 47. When he heard that Jesus was
come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for
48. he was at the point of death. 48. Then said Jesus unto
him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.
49. 49. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my
50. child die. 50. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son
liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had
51. spoken unto him, and he went his way. 51. And as he was
now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth. 52 Then inquired he of them the
52. hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him,
53. Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53. So
the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which
Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed,

54. and his whole house. 54. This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

There seems no reason why the "second miracle" that JESUS did in Cana of Galilee, should be considered as any thing more than an artistic mode, adopted by the author of the gospel, of expressing an opinion of the power and omniscience of the Spirit of GOD, though some may find mystical meanings in many of the passages referring to this miracle.

JOHN, CHAPTER V.

John, Ch. V. 1. After this there was a feast of the Jews: and Jesus
2. went up to Jerusalem. 2. Now there is at Jerusalem, by
the sheep *market*, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew
3. tongue, Bethesda, having five porches. 3. In these lay a
great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered,
4. waiting for the moving of the water. (4. For an angel went
down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water:
whosoever then first after the troubling of the water
stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.)
5. 5. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty
6. and eight years. 6. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that
he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him,
7. Wilt thou be made whole? 7. The impotent man answered
him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me
into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down
8. before me. 8. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed,
9. and walk. 9. And immediately the man was made whole,
and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was
the sabbath.

The pool of Bethesda (chapter v. 2) may refer to the truth, said to be in a well; and the five porches may symbolize the five books of Moses, supposed to lead to the truth.

Another interpretation may make the pool symbolize a soul, prostrated in Spirit, subdued to a profound melancholy, in which the depressed feelings are compared to "a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." Such a soul, we may suppose, becomes moved or stirred by an angel, or good impulse; and then, whatever life-giving feeling comes first into activity is strengthened and prospered. The Spirit of Truth moves such men at times to exclaim, I will arise and go to my Father, &c.

We may remark upon verse 9, that most of the miraculous cures, effected by Jesus, took place on the Sabbath day, because the Sabbath was the day for religious services, and was therefore an appropriate day for representing the power of the Law, acting upon the soul.

John. Ch. V. 10. ¶ The Jews therefore said unto him that was
cured, It is the sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to
11. carry *thy* bed. 11. He answered them, He that made me
whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.
12. 12. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto
13. thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13. And he that was
healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself
14. away, a multitude being in *that* place. 14. Afterward Jesus
findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold thou
art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto
15. thee. 15. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was
16. Jesus which had made him whole. 16. And therefore did
the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because
he had done these things on the sabbath-day.

The caution contained in verse 14,—to sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee,—may intimate the nature of the cures effected by the Law; while we see, at the same time, an allusion to the doctrine elsewhere declared, that when any one falls away a second time, after having become pledged to virtue, his "after state is worse than the first" (Matt. xii. 45; Luke xi. 26).

That the Jews are represented as seeking to "slay" JESUS (verse 16), for working on the Sabbath day, may only be intended to show that they took the Law literally, and could not understand that the "rest," commanded for the Sabbath day, was never intended to interfere with the offices of humanity.

JOHN, CH. V. 17. ¶ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh
18. hitherto, and I work. 18. Therefore the Jews sought the
more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sab-
bath, but said also, that God was his Father, making himself
19. equal with God. 19. Then answered Jesus, and said unto
them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do noth-
ing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what
things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.
20. 20. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all
things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater
21. works than these, that ye may marvel. 21. For as the Fa-
ther raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* even so the
22. Son quickeneth whom he will. 22. For the Father judgeth
no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:
23. 23. That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they
honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, hon-
24. oureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24. Verily,
verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and be-
lieveth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall
not come into condemnation; but is passed from death
unto life.

Verse 19 is one among many passages indicating that the *Letter* can do nothing of itself. But the divine character of the Law, as the Word of GOD, is strongly expressed in this verse, represented by the declaration that the Son, the Letter doeth, what he seeth the Father do.

There seems some little looseness of composition in a few of the verses before us: thus, besides saying (verse 20) that the Father sheweth the Son all things that himself doeth, it is immediately added, that he will show him greater works, &c.,—as if there could be greater works than all the works of God. After saying (verse 19) that the Son can do nothing of himself, it is stated (verse 21) that the Son quickeneth whom he will.

In verse 22 it is stated that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: and yet, we shall see presently (chapter viii. 15) that the Son says, I judge no man, &c. By these two passages taken together it might seem as if neither the Father nor the Son judgeth man. But nothing of this kind presents any serious difficulty unless to a literal student.

The Law is the Son, and it is the immediate expression of the Word of God, or was so regarded; and therefore to honor the Law (verse 23), was to honor the Father, the Spirit of the Law; but to honor not the Law was the same as not to honor the Father.

Verse 24 deserves special consideration, because it must give us the key to the power of Christ to raise the dead. Whosoever hears the Word of the Law [and this may mean, whosoever understands the Law, and believes in its Spirit], is said to pass from death to life.

This is not said of the actual dead, but of the living. The living, who yet were not living in accordance with the Law, were considered as dead—as, where Christ says, let the dead bury their dead; and when one, thus said to be dead, heard or understood the Law, believing in its Spirit, he was said to have passed from death unto life.

The raising of Lazarus is a symbolical representation of this doctrine.

John, Ch. V. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming,
and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the
26. Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 26. For as the
Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to
27. have life in himself; 27. And hath given him authority to
28. execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28.
Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all
29. that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29. And shall
come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection
of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection
30. of damnation. 30. I can of mine own self do nothing: as
I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek
not mine own will, but the will of the father which hath sent
31. me. 31. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.
32. 32. ¶ There is another that beareth witness of me, and I
know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.
33. 33. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.
34. 34. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things
35. I say, that ye might be saved. 35. He was a burning and
a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice
36. in his light. 36. ¶ But I have greater witness than *that* of
John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish,
the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the
37. Father hath sent me. 37. And the Father himself which
hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither

38. heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. 38. And
ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath
39. sent, him ye believe not. 39. ¶ Search the scriptures; for
in them ye think ye have eternal life: And they are they
40. which testify of me. 40. And ye will not come to me, that
41. ye might have life. 41. I receive not honour from men.
42. 42. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in
43. you. 43. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive
me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will
44. receive. 44. How can ye believe, which receive honour one
of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God
45. only? 45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the
Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom
46. ye trust. 46. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have
47. believed me: for he wrote of me. 47. But if ye believe
not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Verse 28. Dead or dormant principles are said to be in their graves; but the Spirit of Truth awakens them, and the good rejoice, but the evil become manifest in this Spirit, and are condemned. This approval and condemnation is passed by one's own Spirit, when touched by the Truth.

Verse 30 repeats that [the Law] can do nothing of itself; and then (verse 31) we read of the two witnesses, meaning the Letter and the Spirit, which in truth mutually testify of each other. But the Spirit is the "greater" witness, as explained in the examination of the 1st chapter.

Verse 39 tells the Jews to search the Scriptures to discover the Spirit of Truth. This is personified in CHRIST, and hence he says that the Scriptures "testify" of him.

Verse 42. The Pharisees are addressed as not having the Love of God, meaning the Love of Truth, for God is Truth.

The concluding verses intimate the personified character of Christ, and that he is the Law, speaking to the Jews, who received not the Law, that is, they did not receive the Law in its Spirit.

JOHN, CHAPTER VI.

John, Ch. VI. 1. After these things Jesus went over the sea of
2. Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias. 2. And a great multitude
followed him, because they saw his miracles which
3. he did on them that were diseased. 3. And Jesus went up
4. into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4. And
5. the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. 5. ¶ When
Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company
come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall
6. we buy bread that these may eat? 6. (And this he
said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would
7. do.) 7. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth
of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them
8. may take a little. 8. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon
9. Peter's brother, saith unto him, 9. There is a lad here,
which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes: but
10. what are they among so many? 10. And Jesus said,
Make the men sit down. (Now there was much grass in
the place.) So the men sat down in number about five
11. thousand. 11. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he
had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the
disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the
12. fishes, as much as they would. 12. When they were filled,
he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain
13. that nothing be lost. 13. Therefore they gathered
them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments
of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above
14. unto them that had eaten. 14. Then those men, when
they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a
truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

In the 6th chapter of John we meet with a miracle, or one of the miracles of feeding the multitude with a few loaves and fishes; where we again observe the doctrine of the double character of the Law, its Letter and Spirit, here symbolized by loaves and fishes.

The remarks in the preceding Part, Section XV., upon the 16th chapter of Matthew, are decisive as to the true meaning of this miracle, and the subject will not be dwelt upon here.

By *leaven* is to be understood doctrine, the Essenes being warned against that of the Pharisees—the children's *bread* being the doctrine of the Essenes.

JOHN, CH. VI. 15. ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that they
would come and take him by force, to make him a king,
16. he departed again into a mountain himself alone. 16. And
when even was *now* come, his disciples went down unto
17. the sea, 17. And entered into a ship, and went over the
sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus
18. was not come to them. 18. And the sea arose by reason
19. of a great wind that blew. 19. So when they had rowed
about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus
walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and
20. they were afraid. 20. But he saith unto them, It is I; be
21. not afraid. 21. Then they willingly received him into the
ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither
they went.

The 15th verse of the 6th chapter seems a very abrupt reference to an attempt to take JESUS by force to make him a king, there having been no prior allusion to such a disposition. We may consider its failure an intimation of the essential freedom of the Spirit, which cannot be appropriated by violence. It must be received as a child. Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xviii. 3). But childhood figures innocence.

And now we come to the miracle of walking on the sea, the symbolism of which is so plain as scarcely to need remark. The darkness referred to (verse 17), is the ignorance which precedes the coming of the Spirit; "Jesus was not yet come to them." The stormy sea figures the commotions of man living, as the phrase is, without God in the world—living without the discipline of the Law or of the Spirit of the Law.

The Spirit of Truth carries the frail bark of man above the commotions of life. Man has often been compared to a ship at sea in the bosom of nature; and if, when violently tossed by the fluctuating or warring waves, the soul receives into itself the Spirit of Truth, it is immediately calmed. This is represented in the gospel (verse 21), by the ship being "immediately" at land, as Jesus was received into it—the ship being here the symbol of man.

John, Ch. VI. 22. ¶ The day following, when the people which
stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none
other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples
were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples
into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;
23. 23. (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh
unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the
24. Lord had given thanks:) 24. When the people therefore
saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they
also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for
25. Jesus. 25. And when they had found him on the other
side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest
26. thou hither? 26. Jesus answered them and said, Verily,
verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw

the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and
27. were filled. 27. Labour not for the meat which perish-
eth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting
life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him
28. hath God the Father sealed. 28. Then said they unto
him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of
29. God? 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is
the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath
30. sent. 30. They said therefore unto him, What sign shew-
est thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what
31. dost thou work? 31. Our fathers did eat manna in the
desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven
32. to eat. 32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I
say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven;
but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
33. 33. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from
34. heaven, and giveth life unto the world. 34. Then said
they unto him Lord, evermore give us this bread.

In verse 27 two kinds of meat are spoken of, one that perisheth, and one that endureth unto everlasting life; the latter *given* by the Son of man.

Here again we have the same distinction so frequently set forward. Meat signifies doctrine; and this, seen in the Letter, perishes; but the enduring meat is the "living water" of the 4th chapter; and this, again, is the wine which the Letter *gives*.

The "work of the works of GOD" (verse 28), is said (verse 29) to be a belief on him whom he hath sent. This is the Law, represented by CHRIST.

But the Law in its Letter is set aside in verse 32, under the name of the bread which Moses gave—said not to have been from Heaven—the "true bread from Heaven" being that given by the Father.

The Father here spoken of, is the Spirit of Truth in which the Law was written, which, in its Letter, represented by Moses, is not "bread from Heaven;" but the Spirit of the Letter is the true Son which (verse 33) cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world; that is, to "as many" as receive it.

JOHN, CH. VI. 35. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of
life: he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he
36. that believeth on me, shall never thirst. 36. But I said
unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not.
37. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me;
and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.
38. 38. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own
39. will, but the will of him that sent me. 39. And this is
the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he
hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it
40. up again at the last day. 40. And this is the will of him
that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise
him up at the last day.

In the 35th verse JESUS declares himself the bread of life [that is, he taught the doctrine of life]; and whoever comes to him shall never hunger, and whoever believes on him shall never thirst. Here he speaks as the "living water," defining it in language similar to that used in the 4th chapter, and we must suppose with the same meaning.

Where this figurative language of eating and drinking is used in Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 21, there is no real contradiction, though it is there said that whoever eats [of wisdom] shall yet be hungry—meaning, hungry for more wisdom—to eat of which, as in John, is satisfying, or satisfactory.

To see and believe not (verse 36), means to see the written Law without understanding it: but (verse 37) all that the Father, or the Spirit of Truth, influences are said to be carried to Christ, and are not cast out.

Verse 38. The Law came down from Heaven, not to do its own will [as heretofore explained], but the will of the Father that sent it; and the Father's will is (verse 39) that the Spirit of Truth should raise up those who are given by the Father, or influenced by the Truth. This is repeated in verse 40. The "last day" refers to the phenomenal death, in which the Spirit of Truth will sustain or raise up its possessor.

Verses 37 and 39 contain language similar to that in Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 18, where we read that wisdom is given to the children "named of him"—that is, to those, as we read in John, who are "given" by the Father. The doctrine, in both parts of Scripture, is the same, and seems to exclude a personal will, as, of itself, a ground of hope. This is also the doctrine of St. Paul, as we may see in many places, especially in the passages (1 Cor. i.), closing with the declaration (verse 31), He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

John, Ch. VI. 41. The Jews then murmured at him, because he
42. said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42.
And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose
father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith,
43. I came down from heaven? 43. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among your-
44. selves. 44. No man can come to me, except the Father
which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at
45. the last day. 45. It is written in the prophets, And they
shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that

hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto
46. me. 46. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he
47. which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47. Verily,
verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

The Jews murmur at this mystical teaching about *bread*, taking it literally; whereas the Essenes, to whom as we suppose the teaching was addressed, knew that by bread was to be understood doctrine; and the doctrine was that the Scriptures are twofold, Letter and Spirit.

Verse 44 states the doctrine, implied in previous verses, that no man can come to CHRIST [that is, no man can understand the Law], except the Father, the Spirit of the Law, draw him.

This doctrine, usually supposed to have been first expressed in the gospel, as if peculiar to the New Testament, is distinctly stated in Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 18, just referred to, where the Spirit is personified as Wisdom, and represented as saying: I therefore, being eternal [and this is the Word of St. John], am given to all my children *which are named of him.*

The eternity of the Word, as Wisdom, is asserted in the same chapter (verse 9), in the language, He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail. The form or mode of announcing the doctrine differs in the New Testament from that in Ecclesiasticus; but the doctrine is the same.

JOHN, CH. VI. 48. I am that bread of life. 49. Your fathers did
50. eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. This is

the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man
51. may eat thereof, and not die. 51. I am the living bread
which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this
bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will
give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.
52. 52. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying,
53. How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat? 53. Then
Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except
ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his
54. blood, ye have no life in you. 54. Whoso eateth my flesh,
and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise
55. him up at the last day. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed,
56. and my blood is drink indeed. 56. He that eateth my
flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.
57. 57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the
Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.
58. 58. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not
as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eat-
59. eth of this bread shall live for ever. 59. These things
said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

Throughout chapter 6th, the teaching turns almost altogether upon the use of a few figurative expressions. Christ is the *bread* of life: that is, he represents the Law, which is the doctrine of life to those who "do" its commands, or "abide" in it, as we shall see presently. But the Law is twofold and is figured in this chapter by flesh and blood (verse 53). In the 3d chapter it was represented by water and spirit. The living doctrine of truth, represented by Christ, is described as coming down from heaven (verse 50); but this has the same meaning as John i. 13, describing those who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Not to *die*, and to live forever, as expressed in these verses does not refer to the natural death of the body, for all men die; but to death by sin—protection from which is one object of the Law.

The word *flesh*, as used in Scripture, is so evidently figurative that the language in verse 51, can in no sense be understood literally. The *flesh*, in the verse itself, is the *bread*, called, in the preceding verse, living bread. This is the living water of the 4th chapter. We are not reading of many things, but of only one thing, which however is understood in two senses.

It is no other than a bold figure in the gospel to speak of the Letter as the *flesh*, which the Spirit is represented as giving for the life of the world (verse 51). The life of the world, as here used, means the salvation of man: and the passage signifies, that the Law prescribes a mode of life which is the salvation of those who obey the Law.

To eat the flesh of CHRIST means to understand or appropriate the Mosaic Law in its Spirit; for Moses is said (chapter v. 46) to have written of CHRIST; and JESUS tells his hearers, If ye believe not the writings of Moses, how shall ye believe my words? an appropriate question, mystically expressed: for the words of CHRIST are the words of the Law he represented, only he speaks as the Spirit of the Law.

The figurative language was used for the instruction of the Essenes, to whom verbal explanations could be made without exposing their secret doctrine of the Spirit.

But the author of the gospel represents the Jews [meaning the Pharisees] as taking the language literally, and they are therefore made to exclaim (verse 52), How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

This question is as pertinent to-day as it was eighteen hundred years ago, and its explanation is as difficult now as formerly, from a literal stand-point. The external view has indeed settled down into a theological dogma, that the flesh was given on Mount Calvary; but this leaves unexplained the manner of appropriating it, as required in the 53d verse: Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

It would seem as if a literal understanding of this verse, should call for an equally literal compliance with it; and then, it might be asked, who has ever received the benefit of the doctrine?

We must suppose that this teaching was addressed to listeners who were themselves to derive benefit from it, at the time it was given, without looking forward to an event, as yet wholly unforeseen.

From the figurative point of view, the sense of this teaching is very plain. CHRIST represents the Law; the Letter of which is the flesh, whilst its Spirit, or internal sense, is the blood or the life of the Law. To receive the benefit of the Law, it was necessary, in the opinion of the Essene teacher, to be born of water and the Spirit (John iii. 5),—and this is expressed in the 6th chapter under the figures of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man.

Here are not two distinct doctrines, but only one doctrine expressed in different ways.

Verse 58 contrasts the life-doctrine with the Letter of the Law, which "the Fathers did eat." Moses, as a person, represents the Law as written; but Christ is the Spirit of the Law, the Holy One of Israel,—the Essene teachers, for the purpose of instruction, personifying the Spirit, who is represented as speaking in the first person, no otherwise than as Wisdom, the same Holy One, is represented as speaking in the older Scriptures in many places.

John, Ch. VI. 60. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had
heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?
61. 61. When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured
62. at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62. *What*
and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he
63. was before? 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the
flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you,
64. *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. 64. But there are some
of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning
who they were that believed not, and who should
65. betray him. 65. And he said, Therefore said I unto you,
that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto
him of my Father.

The teaching in the gospel is supposed to be addressed to a class of Essene initiates, who are, as it were, being slowly brought forward and indoctrinated in the tenets of the sect. These are the "disciples" [of truth]; but when Pharisees are seemingly addressed,—this is dramatic, and we do not suppose any of that sect present. All that is said of the Pharisees is addressed to the disciples, to instruct the latter in the blindness and ignorance of the former.

At this stage of the instruction, even the disciples are represented as finding it difficult to *understand*—expressed in the language (verse 60),—Who can *hear* it? But the fully initiated teacher then refers to a wonderful spiritual experience, expressed in the language,—What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

By a faithful obedience to the Law, and a purified contemplation of its Spirit, there ensues a result answering to this language. The Spirit seems to take form, having "the appearance as that of a man;" and it seems to rise, as out of the letter, called the clouds of heaven, and to ascend up to where it was before.

This is no fiction. It is a life-like representation of an actual experience known to many Christians at this day, who refer their experience to the whole sacred volume, instead of the Law or the older Hebrew sacred books as known to the Essenes.

Verse 63 very sharply draws the distinction between the Letter and the Spirit,—It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: and then, the personified Spirit, speaking in the first person, adds,—The words that I speak to you, *they* are Spirit, and *they* are life.

The first part of this 63d verse corresponds with the teaching of St. Paul (2 Cor. iii. 6). The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. There is not the least opening for a doubt as to the identity of the teaching in the two portions of the Scripture.

"The words that I speak," in this verse, refer to the words which the internal Spirit speaks to every one who listens for its teachings in the Spirit of Truth.

Verse 65 reiterates the doctrine that no man can come to the Spirit, except it were given him by the Father—which may nevertheless be understood rationally. It may be understood by the analogy of the acquisition of truth in any department of knowledge.

It is most easily seen in the intuition by which a mathematical truth is recognized, for no such truth is comprehended by an immediate act of the will. The student has his problem before him,—his diagram, perhaps, duly marked out, &c. He then sits down to the study or contemplation of the problem, and after perceiving certain relations of lines and angles, the truth, at length, dawns upon him: a truth, it may be, which is not only independent of the will, but which the wealth of the world cannot purchase.

That there is no royal road to learning, embodies the very principle expressed in the text we are considering; only we must understand by learning, that form of it which in the Scriptures is called wisdom, which, personified, is the Holy One of Israel in the Old Testament, and JESUS CHRIST in the New Testament.

JOHN, CH. VI. 66. ¶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back,
67. and walked no more with him. 67. Then said Jesus unto
68. the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68. Then Simon Peter

answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the
69. words of eternal life. 69. And we believe, and are sure that
70. thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. 70. Jesus
answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of
71. you is a devil? 71. He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of
Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one
of the twelve.

The writer of the gospel now represents, in verse 66, a not uncommon occurrence in what may be called spiritual teaching: that some of the novitiates were unable to receive the doctrine and withdrew from the congregation. But Simon Peter is made to say, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life—declaring, in the next verse, the divinity of the Son.

This expresses rather the fears than the opinion of one, not yet thoroughly taught, that the truth, if not seen in the Law, could not be seen anywhere—the Jews having no other source of doctrine.

The allusion to Judas, in the last two verses of the 6th chapter, is dramatic, and must be referred to the writer of the gospel, who has, in his own mind, an entire conception of the course of the drama, which looked forward to a tragical termination.

JOHN, CHAPTER VII.

John, Ch. VII. 1. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for
he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to
2. kill him. 2. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at
3. hand. 3. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart
hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see
4. the works that thou doest. 4. For *there is* no man *that*
doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be
known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to
5. the world. 5. (For neither did his brethren believe in
6. him.) 6. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet
7. come: but your time is always ready. 7. The world cannot
hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that
8. the works thereof are evil. 8. Go ye up unto this feast:
I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full
9. come. 9. When he had said these words unto them, he
10. abode *still* in Galilee. 10. ¶ But when his brethren were
gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly,
11. but as it were in secret. 11. Then the Jews sought him
12. at the feast, and said, Where is he? 12. And there was
much murmuring among the people concerning him: for
some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he
13. deceiveth the people. 13. Howbeit, no man spake openly
of him, for fear of the Jews.

The first verses of the 7th chapter intimate the divided opinion among the Jews with respect to the Law, one object of the gospel being to exhibit this contrariety of opinion.

Verse 8 is remarkable as containing a refusal to go up to the feast; when it appears (verse 10) that Jesus did go up to the feast, "as it were in secret." The meaning is, that the Law was not recognized or understood at the feast, and yet that its Spirit was there invisibly—as it were in secret.

John, Ch. VII. 14. ¶ Now about the midst of the feast, Jesus
15. went up into the temple and taught. 15. And the Jews
marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having
16. never learned? 16. Jesus answered them, and said, My
17. doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17. If any
man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether
18. it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. 18. He that
speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that
seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no
19. unrighteousness is in him. 19. Did not Moses give you
the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go
20. ye about to kill me? 20. The people answered and said,
21. Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? 21.
Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work,
22. and ye all marvel. 22. Moses therefore gave unto you
circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fath-
23. ers;) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man. 23.
If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the
law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me,
because I have made a man every whit whole on the sab-
24. bath-day? 24. Judge not according to the appearance,
but judge righteous judgment.

It is stated in verse 14 that Jesus taught in the temple about the midst of the feast, but the teaching is not given. The Jews are represented (verse 15) as marvelling, &c., and then Jesus answered, speaking, as we interpret him, in the name of the Law (verse 16), My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. This is followed by the much-used passage (verse 15), If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

To do the will of him who "sent" the Law, is to obey the Law; and the statement is, that whoever will obey the Law shall know experimentally whether it is conceived in a beneficent and divine Spirit, or whether the writing is destitute of the witness of the Spirit.

We cannot suppose that this test referred to the teaching in "the midst of the feast," for that is not recorded. By the assumption that Christ represents the Law, and was so understood by the Essenes to whom the gospel was a species of lecture, the meaning is sufficiently plain.

Jesus, the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xxi. 11), gives us, in other words, the very same rule, just cited from John, for understanding the commandments: He that keepeth the Law of the Lord getteth the understanding thereof: and the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom. Jesus in John, and Jesus the son of Sirach, both teach the necessity of obedience to the Law as the appointed channel through which a knowledge of the Law comes to light—by which it not only becomes known, but is known to be of God.

Verse 18, though it refers to the Law, expresses a universal truth applicable to all men who undertake to publish a doctrine, to wit: that every genuine teacher should teach from an impersonal point of view, and must not seek his own glory. The Spirit of Truth has no connection or affinity with a love of personal reputation. Divine Truth is self-supporting, and herein it is distinguished from what may be called profane truth, which stands upon human authority and cannot rise above it. Divine Truth may be published by man, and may be sustained for a time by human authority; but, so long as it is seen only as depending upon this authority, it is John the Baptist and is not known as the true Light.

The four gospels themselves are virtually anonymous; for although they appear as if written "according" to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, respectively, we know nothing of the personal lives of either of the writers, except from a few hints gathered from the sacred books themselves.

Verse 24 contains an injunction which may serve in our time, as an intimation to judge, not according to the "appearance;" but we should judge "righteous judgment." In this brief passage a principle of justice, rectitude, or righteousness, is recognized by which all men should judge the very teaching in the gospels themselves.

JOHN, CH. VII. 25. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not
26. this he whom they seek to kill? 26. But lo, he speaketh
boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers
27. know indeed that this is the very Christ. 27. Howbeit,
we know this man, whence he is: but when Christ com-
28. eth, no man knoweth whence he is. 28. Then cried Jesus
in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me,
and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of my-
self, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.
29. 29. But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath
30. sent me. 30. Then they sought to take him: but no man
laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

31. 31. And many of the people believed on him, and said When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

Several verses commencing at the 25th indicate a controversy among the Jews, as to the true character of the Law. The Pharisees saw it in the Letter, but the Essenes saw it in the Spirit, or saw the spiritual sense of the Letter. This controversy is frequently exhibited in the gospels where the Essenes are styled disciples and brethren, because the writers were members of that order.

The language (verse 27), When CHRIST cometh, no man knoweth whence he is, was conceived in a higher Spirit than is usually imputed to the Pharisaic Jews, who looked for a Prince of the house of David in the flesh. This language must therefore be attributed to the author of the gospel, who understood, that when the true CHRIST comes, it is not known whence he cometh or whither he goeth—as expressed in verse 8 of the 3d chapter.

The gospels are treated in this inquiry as if written by Essenes for the edification of each other or for the instruction of catechumens of the order, the Law being personified and dramatically brought into contact and collision with the Pharisees, in the portion of the gospel we are now considering, in order to exhibit their incompetency as teachers, and to show why they were so, to wit: because they judged from "appearances;" meaning according to the Letter, and not according to righteousness or the principle of Truth in itself.

Verse 28 is remarkable, and may go far towards satisfying a student that the gospel is the product of a single individual who wrote from an *idea* or a *doctrine*, and not as a historian of external facts. We have seen that the Baptist (chapter i. verse 26) speaks of the true CHRIST, the Light, as standing among the Jews, but whom they "knew not." In this 28th verse the very same doctrine is put into the mouth of CHRIST himself, who is made to refer to him, by whom he was sent, as unknown to those he addressed. He does not take this to himself, but he tells his hearers that they do not know him, by whom he was sent, referring to the Spirit of the Law; and this is the Light to which the Baptist referred in the 1st chapter.

The Baptist refers to CHRIST, the Spirit of the Law, as standing among the Jews; but whom the Jews knew not. Here, in the 7th chapter, CHRIST refers to him, by whom he was sent [in other places called the Father], whom the Jews also "knew not." CHRIST, as the Spirit, is the Father of the Law, and the Spirit of the Law. This was what the Jews *knew not;* and this language being used by the Baptist in one place, and by CHRIST in another, evidently referring to the same thing, furnishes a sufficient critical ground for an opinion, that both passages were written by the Evangelist under the influence of his conception of CHRIST as both the Father and the Spirit of the Letter, and without any view to an actual history.

Similar remarks may be made upon the answer of CHRIST to Pilate (chapter xviii. 37), where he speaks in the very character of the Baptist, as described in the first chapter, as already noticed.

Verse 29. But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me. This is an out-speaking of the Spirit of Truth, which knows itself, and recognizes its authority in itself. To see this in the Law is to see the Law as divine, and this is what is called the witness of the Spirit. The Essene thus seeing it in the Law, dramatically gives the Law life, and sets it forward as claiming a knowledge as to whence it came. This verse is simply a mystical expression of the Essene opinion, that the Law contains or teaches a true doctrine of life.

Except from this point of view the difficulties in these verses are insurmountable. When JESUS says, as in verse 28, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am—he is not speaking of the true CHRIST, the Spirit, whom they knew not (same verse); but he refers to the Letter which the Jews saw before them. Thus, speaking of the Letter, he says, I am not come of myself—precisely as the Bible may now be supposed to speak to this age, if we put life into it and give it voice. It is a writing, and as such, it is John the Baptist; but it treats of Divine Truth, and this is its Spirit, its CHRIST. We may see it first in the Letter, and this is the water-baptism: and then, we may see the Truth as it is in itself, and as it was before the Letter was written, and this is the baptism by fire. This is to be born of water and the Spirit, and it is to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man; that is, of the sacred Scriptures.

Verse 30 represents the progressing state of the imaginary controversy between the Jews and the Essenes; but the contemplated events of the drama have not yet been enacted: "his hour was not come."

Verse 30 is a mystical mode of stating that many believed in the Law under a conviction, that no *person* could come that would do more miracles outwardly than the Law accomplished inwardly, by its proper work upon the heart of man—this being a legitimate appeal to the witness of the Spirit.

JOHN CH. VII. 32. ¶ The Pharisees heard that the people mur-
mured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and
33. the chief priests sent officers to take him. 33. Then said
Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and
34. *then* I go unto him that sent me. 34. Ye shall seek me,
and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot
35. come. 35. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither
will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the
dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?
36. 36. What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall
seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither*
ye cannot come?

In verses 32 to 36 we meet with mystical language used in several places in the gospel, which the Jews [meaning the Pharisees of verse 32] could not understand, representing the going away of JESUS, and that the Pharisees would not be able to find him—meaning, that the Pharisees did not understand the Spirit and could not find it; the reason of which will soon be given, that they judged after the flesh; meaning that they judged after the Letter.

The mystery which lies in the language (verse 36), Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come, was a mystery to those who saw the Law in its Letter, and did not understand its Spirit. They are described as seeking the Spirit in the Letter, and as not being able to find it; for although it is in the Letter, it is not seen in the Letter, except by a principle in the student; this inner eye being often compared to the external eye, to which vision is only possible according to its state.

But this simile ought not to be overstrained, as it often is, to the great discouragement of many well-disposed students. The mystery begins to clear up as soon as any one begins to see with simplicity, candor, and truth.

JOHN, CH. VII. 37. In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus
stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come
38. unto me, and drink. 38. He that believeth on me, as the
scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living
39. water. 39. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they
that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was
40. not yet *given*, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) 40.
¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this
41. saying, said, Of a truth, this is the Prophet. 41. Others
said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come
42. out of Galilee? 42. Hath not the scripture said, That Christ
cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Beth-
43. lehem, where David was? 43. So there was a division
44. among the people because of him. 44. And some of them
would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

We might here comment at considerable length, to illustrate the meaning of several verses commencing with the 37th, but there is the less need of it, when the figurative character of the language is recognized, and it is seen to refer to the Hebrew sacred writings. The written Law is symbolized by water, the unseen Spirit of which is the Holy One of Israel, and is personified as speaking in CHRIST. Hence the language of verse 37, If any man thirst [for wisdom, or for the truth], let him come unto me [the Hebrew sacred writings], and drink. This is only a repetition, in another form, of the invitation in Isaiah lv. 1, Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.; that is, come to the sacred Scriptures.

The Scriptures may be said to be almost inlaid with this species of figurative language. Thus, in Isaiah (xii. 3) we read,—With joy shall ye draw *water* out of the *wells* of salvation. These wells are the Scriptures, the waters of which are said to *save* those who *drink* of them. They were given for the life of the world—that is, of man.

Verse 38. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This is only a farther expression of the Truth, by referring to the consequences of a belief in the Law, though the consequences are described in similar figurative language, the divine Truth flowing through the soul being compared to rivers of living water. This is that living water which CHRIST is said to give, because he is that living water personified.

Verse 39. But this spake he of the Spirit, &c., is parenthetical in many bibles, indicating that it is a gloss, made in the margin of some early copy and subsequently taken into the text, though it is not necessary to determine whether this verse was originally in the gospel or not.

Verses 40 to 44 represent only the divided state of opinion among the Jews, as to the true character of the Law.

John, Ch. VII. 45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests
and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye
46. not brought him? 46. The officers answered, Never man
47. spake like this man. 47. Then answered them the Phari-
48. sees, Are ye also deceived? 48. Have any of the rulers,
49. or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49. But this people
50. who knoweth not the law are cursed. 50. Nicodemus
saith unto them (he that came to Jesus by night, being
51. one of them,) 51. Doth our law judge *any* man before it
52. hear him, and know what he doeth? 52. They answered
and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and
53. look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53. And
every man went unto his own house.

The remaining verses of the 7th chapter, from verse 45, represent still further the divided opinion among the Jews, ending, as often happens, by every one remaining in his own persuasion, expressed in the words, And every man went unto his own *house.*

JOHN, CHAPTER VIII.

John, Ch. VIII. 1. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives: 2. And
early in the morning he came again into the temple, and
all the people came unto him; and he sat down and taught
3. them. 3. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him
a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in
4. the midst, 4. They say unto him, Master, this woman was
5. taken in adultery, in the very act. 5. Now Moses in the
law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what
6. sayest thou? 6. This they said, tempting him, that they
might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and
with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard*
7. *them not.* 7. So when they continued asking him, he
lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without
8. sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8. And
9. again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9. And
they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* con-
science, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even*
unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman
10. standing in the midst. 10. When Jesus had lifted up him-
self, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her,
Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man
11. condemned thee? 11. She said, No man, Lord. And
Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and
sin no more.

The opening verses of the 8th chapter of John, to verse 11, seem intended to exhibit the Pharisees in an odious light,—as guilty themselves and yet urging a literal application of the penal law against others.

This is neutralized by the Spirit, which supersedes the mere writing by the injunction,—Go, and sin no more.

So far as any doctrine is taught by this scene it is, that when the Spirit of Truth is in the ascendant, the mere infliction of an outward penalty is unnecessary. The office of a penalty is to reform a sinner: but this office is rendered useless by the Spirit of Truth, which accomplishes even more than is proposed by a penalty, for the latter can only secure an external compliance with the Law. Where the Spirit of Truth prevails, a penalty may inflict pain, but can have no moral efficacy.

The symbolism expressed by the representation of JESUS,—writing on the *ground*, as though he heard not the [outward] accusation,—is very perfect and beautiful, and is so clear as to need no explanation.

JOHN, CH. VIII. 12. ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying,
I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not
13. walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. 13. The
Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of
14. thyself; thy record is not true. 14. Jesus answered and
said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my
record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I
go: but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.
15, 16. 15. Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man. 16. And
yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone,
17. but I and the Father that sent me. 17. It is also written
18. in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18. I
am one that bear witness of myself; and the Father that
19. sent me, beareth witness of me. 19. Then said they unto
him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither
know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should
20. have known my Father also. 20. These words spake

> Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.

Jesus now (verse 12) speaks again in the name of the Law: I [the Law] am the Light of the world: he that followeth me [that is, he who obeys the precepts of the Law], shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

That the Jew "thought he had" life in the Law, might be shown by an endless number of passages from the older writings; and this is merely reiterated in the New Testament.

After setting forth the excellence of Wisdom, Baruch tells us where it is to be found:—This is the book of the commandments of God, and the Law that endureth forever: all they that keep it shall come to life; but such as leave it shall die. Turn thee, O Jacob, and take hold of it: walk in the presence of the *Light* thereof, that thou mayest be illuminated.

This is the Light that John speaks of, personified as saying, I am the *Light* of the world, &c. To be illuminated by the Law was to receive the Light that cometh after the water-baptism.

While it is supposed that this is said of the Law, it should be remembered that the language was used by those who saw the Law in its Spirit, another name for which is Wisdom; and this, personified in Ecclesiasticus, expresses the same view in chapter xxiv. 22, He that obeyeth me shall never be confounded, and they that work by me shall not do amiss. By such references it becomes clear that the gospel is not a new truth, but a more concentrated expression of the truth already substantially declared in the older Hebrew books.

In the verses now before us we meet again with a controversy, as between the Essene and the Pharisaic point of view. In verse 13, the Pharisees are represented as saying to JESUS, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

JESUS, that is, the Law, answered and said unto them (verse 14), Though I bear record of myself, yet my record [my writing] is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell whence I came and whither I go.

Upon the supposition of a *person*, from whom we might have a right to expect consistency, the latter part of the verse just recited is in direct contradiction to verse 28 of the preceding chapter, where CHRIST is represented as saying to the Pharisees, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am. But there is no difficulty in adjusting these seemingly contradictory passages to the mythical view.

CHRIST represents the Law, and speaks, now as its Letter, and now as its Spirit. As a Letter the Pharisees knew something of the Law; and hence CHRIST says in the 7th chapter—Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am:—adding, And I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. In the 8th chapter JESUS speaks in the name of the Spirit that sent him, and says, I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I came, and whither I go. In the 7th chapter CHRIST speaks from the Letter, which the Jews saw and had some knowledge of; but in the 8th chapter he speaks from the Spirit, and tells the Pharisees—Ye cannot tell whence I came, &c., just as in the 7th chapter, he tells them they knew not the Spirit that sent him.

JESUS now says (verse 15), Ye judge after the flesh: I judge no man.

CHRIST is represented as in controversy with the Pharisees; and after the explanations already made it seems impossible not to understand that, in this reference to the *flesh*, he uses the mystical expression for the *Letter:* the Pharisees, in other words, judged after the *Letter;* and this is the reason why they knew not whence CHRIST came or whither he goes.

We have already remarked upon the declaration—I judge no man—as apparently in contradiction with the declaration in chapter v. 22, For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son. But we are not attempting a mere verbal criticism, and are not seeking difficulties, or what may appear to be difficulties to a literalist. We do not treat the gospels as literal histories, but as freely written mythical representations designed to teach doctrine and not history.

For the purpose of teaching the Essene initiates, JESUS is represented as saying to the Pharisees, Ye judge after the flesh—meaning the Letter; and this is in harmony with the injunction in chapter vii. 24, Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment: for the *appearance*, again, is the *Letter*, upon which no sound judgment could be made, but it was necessary to judge from the higher point of view, that of truth and righteousness; for the Truth alone is the real judge of all that is said in its name.

After the words (verse 15), I judge no man, it is added (verse 16), And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true. This means, that while the Letter in itself is impassive and neither does any thing nor judges any man, still, if what is written in the Law is applicable as a judgment upon any one, his conduct bringing him into conflict with the Law, it will be found that the Law is true; for, says the Law, I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. The Father is the Spirit of Truth in which the Law was written, and is said to be with it, to enforce its judgments. The Law is impersonal and impartial: it is like God sending his rain upon the just and the unjust, distinguishing, that is, judging no man.

We may illustrate this by a very simple case. That fire burns is a Law: but now, while, as a Law, fire burns no man, still, if any man comes into contact or conflict with fire, he will know that the Law is true.

Verses 17 and 18 repeat that the Father is a witness of the Letter, while the Letter is a testimony to the Spirit of Truth which is the Father of the Letter.

Here are the TWO WITNESSES, so much talked of in the Church, to wit: the Letter, and the Spirit in which the Letter is written—each bearing testimony of the other, the two together manifesting the essential unity, which, in itself, is the so-called "incommunicable name."

Verse 19. Then said the Pharisees unto him, Where is thy Father? as if they had asked an Essene, What do you mean by the internal or spiritual sense of the Law? But JESUS, representing an Essene, bound by his oath not to disclose the secret doctrine, answers obscurely, saying, Ye neither know me [the Letter], nor my Father [the Spirit of the Letter]; if ye had known the Letter [rightly], ye should have known the Spirit of the Letter also.

Verse 20 shows that the drama is not yet concluded: "his hour was not yet come."

JOHN, CH. VIII. 21. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my
way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins:
22. whither I go, ye cannot come. 22. Then said the Jews,
Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye
23. cannot come. 23. And he said unto them, Ye are from
beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am
24. not of this world. 24. I said therefore unto you, that ye
shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*,
25. ye shall die in your sins. 25. Then said they unto him,
Who art thou? And Jesus said unto them, Even *the same*
26. that I said unto you from the beginning. 26. I have many
things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me,
is true; and I speak to the world those things which I
27. have heard of him. 27. They understood not that he
spake to them of the Father.

Verse 21. Then said [the Law] again unto [the Pharisees], I go my way, and ye [who judge after the flesh, the Letter, verse 15] shall seek [to understand] me [but shall not be able], and shall die in your sins.

The Essene teacher is referring to the Pharisees, but is instructing his hearers, that they [the Pharisees] cannot understand the doctrine of the Spirit; saying, Whither I go [that is, what the Law signifies], ye cannot come [that is, ye cannot understand, because ye look to the Letter only].

We have already met with this language repeatedly, and shall yet meet it again as we proceed in the gospel.

Verse 22 only intimates that the Jews, meaning the Pharisees of verse 13, took what was said literally.

We do not suppose an actual controversy in the case; but a scene is introduced by which to exhibit the Essene opinion, that the Pharisees saw the Law only in the Letter, the flesh, and could not follow the Spirit, which is invisible. Verse 23 is used for the same purpose, intimating that the Pharisees were from beneath, or judged after the Letter, whereas the Law was from above, or was conceived and written in the Spirit of Truth.

Verse 24 may assure us of the Essene opinion, that unless the Law was conceived as divine, or believed to be the Messias, and faithfully followed, there was no salvation or safety for them.

Verse 25. Then said [the Pharisees], Who art thou? [that is, what does the Law mean or signify?] and [the Law] saith unto them, Even the same I said unto you from the beginning,—for the written Law speaks but one and the same language always.

Verse 26 indicates that the Law is complicated and teaches many things; but the Law speaks to the world those things which it has heard from "him," that is, from the Father, as above explained.

The Essene adds (verse 27), that the Pharisees did not know that this mysterious reference to "him," was to the Father.

This expression, the Father, as used in the gospel, is metaphorical. It refers to the Spirit in which the sacred books of the Hebrews were written. Its use may be perfectly illustrated from the Phædrus of Plato, where, indeed, we may find many passages throwing much light upon the gospel before us, which, as the author believes, was written in Greek at Alexandria, by one who had been a student of Plato's writings.

Many writers have supposed that John's use of the word Logos* evinces his acquaintance with the doc-

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* Why more has not been said by modern writers, of the remarkable references or quotations by Augustine in the 7th Book of his Confessions, seems very strange. The Bishop expressly refers to what he calls "certain books of the Platonists," and recites the *five first verses* of John's gospel as contained in them,—"not indeed (says he) in the very same words, but to the very same purpose:" and he recites several other important portions of John under the same remark.

He found in those books of the Platonists, the doctrine, that the soul of man, though it bears witness to the light, yet itself is not that light; but that the Word of God, being God, is that true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world: And that, He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He also read in those same books of the trines of Plato; but the connection may be more decidedly seen from several other coincidences, particularly from the doctrine taught in the Phædrus.

As it may assist a student of this subject, we will briefly refer to that dialogue, and recite a few passages from it, by which a careful reader may see the very doctrine of the Letter and the Spirit, and the relation of one to the other, as exhibited symbolically in John, even to the use of the two expressions, *water* and *Father*, as symbols, the one of the Letter and the other of the Spirit of the Letter.

In the dialogue in question there are but two speakers, Socrates and Phædrus, who are represented as conversationally discussing on the banks of the Ilissus, a speech of a professed orator, Lysias; Socrates making

Platonists the doctrine that, God the Word was born not of flesh nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. He tells us, further, that he "traced in those Platonic books" that it was many and divers ways said, that the Son was in the form of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for that naturally He was the same substance. He read also in those books that, Before all times and above all times Thy Only-begotten Son remaineth unchangeable, coëternal with Thee, and that of His fulness souls receive, that they may be blessed; and that, by participation of wisdom abiding in them, they are renewed, so as to be wise.

The Bishop did not find in those books certain other doctrines, he tells us, and among these were the passages of John i. 11; i. 14. Phil. ii. 6–11. Rom. v. 6. Rom. viii. 32. What books of the Platonists could they have been, thus referred to by one of the most celebrated of the Fathers of the Church?

the speech an occasion for teaching some of the most important doctrines to be found in Plato. In this dialogue Plato has introduced an argument for the immortality of the soul, which, although not in the Phædo, Cicero thought the most complete and satisfactory that had ever been advanced upon that subject. But we will not dwell on this.

The principal doctrine taught in the Phædrus is to the effect, that there is a certain truth in the nature of things, which is removed from all sublunar influences, according to which all speeches and writings should conform or they must themselves be without truth and without value.

Now this truth is invisible; and it is the *light* of St. John, which is immeasurably more important than any writing whatever, and is itself the proper judge of all writings.

To show the inferiority of writings in comparison with the truth itself, Socrates introduces the story of an Egyptian deity Theuth, who is said to have invented many arts, and among others the use of letters, with which he was greatly delighted. After his invention, he went with it to Thamus, "king of all Egypt," to make it known "for the benefit of mankind," as he thought it would make them "wiser and better able to remember." But the king is reported to have answered: "Most ingenious Theuth, one person is able to give birth to art, another to judge of what amount of detriment or advantage it will be to those who are to use it; and now you, as being the father of letters, out of fondness have attributed to them just the contrary effect to that which they will have. For this invention will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn it, through the neglect of memory; for that, through trusting to writing, they will remember outwardly, by means of foreign marks, and not inwardly by means of their own faculties. So that you have not discovered a medicine for memory, but for recollection. And you are providing for your disciples the *appearance* and not the reality of wisdom. For hearing many things through your means without instruction, they will appear to know a great deal, although they are for the most part ignorant, and will become troublesome associates, through thinking themselves wise instead of being so."

The distinction between memory and recollection is shown in the Meno; and we will only remark here, that it is substantially that which is commonly understood as distinguishing the reason from the understanding, wisdom from mere learning, or, again, science from empiric knowledge.

Phædrus makes a passing remark upon the story of Socrates, who resumes

"But, my friend, those who reside in the temple of Dodonean Jupiter assert that the first prophetic discourses issued from the oak. It was sufficient for the men of those days, as they were not so wise as you moderns, to listen to oaks and rocks, through their simplicity, *if only they spoke the truth.* And does it make any difference to you, forsooth, who the speaker is, or to what country he belongs? For you should alone consider whether what is asserted is true or false."

The point of the argument in the dialogue has been to show that, without a knowledge of the truth, no one can judge of a writing, whether it is true or false. Socrates proceeds:

"Hence, he who thinks to commit an art to writing, or to receive it when delivered by this instrument, as if something clear and solid would result from the writing, must be full of simplicity, and is truly ignorant of the prophecy of Ammon, since he thinks that written words are of further value than to remind one who already knows the subject of which the writings treat."

The kind of knowledge here referred to is not acquired by reading or external instruction, but Plato means by it the Truth, as it is eternal in GOD; and this is the Word of St. John. Socrates continues:

"For writing, indeed, Phædrus, has this inconvenience, and truly resembles painting. For its productions stand out as if they were alive; but if you ask them any question, they observe a solemn silence. And so it is with written discourses: you would think that they spoke, as though they possessed some wisdom; but if you ask them about any thing they say, from a desire to understand it, *they give only one and the self-same answer.*"

Here we have the exact parallel to the passage in John, where the Pharisees asked JESUS, Who art thou?

And Jesus saith unto them, *Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning* (John viii. 25). Here is no explanation, no real answer to the question, Who art thou? neither has there been in the former part of the gospel; but JESUS answers in the very spirit of Plato: Even the same I said unto you from the beginning;—for JESUS is the written Scriptures.

But Socrates adds further:

"And when a discourse is once written, it is tossed about everywhere, equally among those who understand it, and among those whom it in no wise concerns, and it knows not to whom it ought to speak, and to whom not. And when it is ill-treated and unjustly reviled, it always needs its FATHER to help it; for, of itself, it can neither defend nor help itself."

Here we have a precise key for understanding the use of the expression, the FATHER, in the gospel; only that, in the gospel, it is applied particularly to the Spirit of the Hebrew sacred Law, considered as the Truth or Word of GOD—the writing, as such, being the Son of man.

When these sacred writings are not understood and are *unjustly reviled*, they need their Father, the Spirit of Truth, to "help them out;" for they can do nothing of themselves (John v. 19–30, and ch. viii. 28); and when questioned as to their meaning, they are like pictures with one expression, and always make one and the same answer.

But this is not all: for Socrates now proceeds to indicate something of the true writing, that by the

Spirit of God on the heart, as St. Paul expresses it; for he says, still addressing Phædrus:

"But what! shall we consider another discourse, this one's legitimate brother, and how far better and more powerful it naturally is than this?"

This points to that Light which comes after the Letter, whose shoe's latchet the Baptist is not worthy to unloose; [which] is preferred before the Baptist, because [he] was before it.

Phædrus asks, What is this, and how do you say it is produced?

Soc. That which, in conjunction with science, is written in the learner's soul, which is able to defend itself, and knows to whom it ought to speak, and before whom it ought to be silent.

Phæ. You mean the discourse of a man endued with knowledge that has life and soul, of which the written may be justly called an image.

The next passage in the dialogue refers to a husbandman sowing seeds, and insists upon the patience with which he will wait the due time of nature for their growth and maturity; and then Socrates adds:

Soc. But shall we say that the man who possesses the science of things *just*, *beautiful*, and *good*, is endued with less intellect than a husbandman, with respect to the seeds which he sows?

Phæ. By no means.

Soc. He will not, then, seriously write them in WATER, sowing them *with ink by means of a pen*, with words that are unable to defend themselves by speech, and unable adequately to teach the truth.

Here we have the principle by which the evangelists, all of them,—learned Platonic Hebrews of Grecian Alexandria,—saw, in the written Hebrew books, the WATER which they represented by John the Baptist. There is no need of saying, nor does the author assert that the gospel writers have directly, or in a dependent sense, drawn upon Plato; but it is very clear, that the doctrine in John, of the superiority of the Spirit over the Letter, is in perfect harmony with the doctrine of Plato.

Phædrus gives his assent, as usual, to what Socrates says; and the teacher then proceeds to say, that whoever "sows and writes in the gardens of letters," will do so "for the sake of diversion, treasuring up memoranda for himself, when he comes to the forgetfulness of old age, and *for all who are going on the same track;* and he will be delighted at seeing them in their tender growth; and while other men pursue other diversions, refreshing themselves with banquets, and other pleasures akin to these, he, as it appears, instead of these, will pass his time in the diversions I have mentioned.

Phæ. You speak of a very noble in comparison with a mean diversion, Socrates, when a man is able to divert himself with discourses, telling stories [he might have said parables] about JUSTICE and the other things you mention.

Soc. It is so indeed, my dear Phædrus. But, in my opinion, something far more noble results from this, when a man, availing himself of dialectic art, on meeting with a congenial soul, plants and sows scientific discourses which are able to aid both themselves and him that planted them, and are not unfruitful but contain seed within themselves, from whence others springing up in other minds are able to make this seed immortal, and make their possessor happy as far as it is possible for man to be so.

What seed is this which is said to be the beginning of an immortal growth, but the *living water* of John iv. 14, which, in him who drinks of it, shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life? We may say that Plato had no knowledge of the true living water; but nothing is more certain than that, if he had written after instead of before the evangelists, he would have been accused of plagiarism.

A little farther on in the dialogue Socrates adjudges many discourses to be worthless, repeating that the best writings can only serve for the purpose of reminding those who already *know* (as explained before), and that "only in discourses taught and spoken for the sake of instruction, and really written in the soul about things *just*, and *beautiful*, and *good*, is there found what is clear and perfect and worthy of study; and that such discourses ought to be called as it were their *author's legitimate offspring;* first of all that which is in himself, if it is there by his own invention; then any *children*, or *brothers* of the former that have at the same time worthily sprung up in the souls of others:

whoever thinks thus and dismisses all others, that man, Phædrus, appears to be such a one as you and I should pray that we might become."

Here again we have the relation of Father and Son in the expression, the author's legitimate offspring; and this language, applied to the Hebrew sacred writings, would characterize them as Father and Son,—the visible Son of an invisible Father, the very Baptist and CHRIST of the gospels, these being representative persons brought forward in a divine drama to figure the Letter and Spirit of the older Hebrew sacred writings.

We see, first, John the Baptist, that is, the Letter; we then discover its Truth, and this is the Spirit, the CHRIST; and lastly we see this Spirit as it was before the Letter, and this is the Father; and "these three are One," the eternal Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

We are not seeking gospel parallels in Plato. If we were, we should exhibit Plato's doctrine of the forgiveness of injuries, and several other important doctrines, including that of love so wonderfully exhibited in the Symposium. Does this throw a blight upon the truth? Not so: a doctrine is not the less true, because a heathen saw and taught it.

But it may be said that the beautiful doctrines of the philosophers never took effect in the world, and required a divine sanction to make them observed.

Before a point like this could be determined, it would be necessary to show that *true* Christianity has taken effect in the world; and we must inquire into the nature and causes of civilization. We must ascertain the effects of the arts and sciences; and weigh carefully the influences of one nation upon another, and of the literature of remote ages upon modern times, &c., &c.

As we have no design to enter into this discussion, we will now return to the further consideration of the gospel of John.

John, Ch. VIII. 28. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have
lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*,
and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath
29. taught me, I speak these things. 29. And he that sent me
is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do al-
30. ways those things that please him. 30. As he spake these
words, many believed on him.

In verse 24 we have seen that Jesus tells the Pharisees that they shall die in their sins, if they do not believe in the divinity of the Law, as the Messias or Saviour,—which it is in its Spirit,—this being the true meaning of that verse. In verse 28, the same sense is expressed by the language, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, &c.

The modern Christian will best understand this, and many other portions of the gospel by considering them as said, not merely of the older Hebrew writings, but of the whole Bible, the Spirit of which is the Spirit of the Law, only more and more developed, manifesting the state of the world when its several portions were written. The spirit of verse 28 requires us to say: When the Bible is lifted up, or conceived as divine, then, its followers, by obedience to it, shall know that the Bible is "he;" that is, the Messias or Saviour; while, nevertheless, the Bible "does nothing of itself," and "speaks" only the things that are written in it by its Father, the Spirit of Truth.

The reader should keep in mind, what has repeatedly been suggested in this work, that there is another and a deeper sense in the symbolism of the Gospel, where the truth is seen in universal nature, independently of all writings and in no manner dependent upon them, writings being at best, according to Plato, but an image of the truth—a principle to which the Platonic writings themselves must be subjected in common with all other writings. This is properly the Wisdom, which we are told to EXALT, and she shall promote us (Prov. iv. 8); and we read, Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee; love her, and she shall keep thee (Prov. iv. 6).

We repeat, therefore, that whatever is true of a writing, is true in a still higher sense; and we should keep in mind, that whilst a writing may perish, the truth cannot perish; and so, likewise, whilst a writing may be mutilated and corrupted, this cannot be said of the Spirit of Truth itself.

Verse 29 expresses the Essene opinion that the Father of the Law is true, or truth, and has not left the written Law alone, but works with it, and is the real author of all of its works in the soul—all of its works being pleasing to the Father; that is, they are in harmony with the truth, because they are supposed to proceed from it.

Again we say, let the modern Christian imagine the Bible, instead of simply the Law, as thus speaking, and he may understand this Essene teaching. The Bible does nothing of itself. It speaks only what the Father, as the Spirit of Truth, has dictated in it. It is not alone, but the Father is with it; and what it does in the soul, is pleasing to the Father, because it is the living Father in the soul. This manner of speaking is simply a mode of symbolical instruction used in the Essene society.

John, Ch. VIII. 31. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples
32. indeed; 32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

In verse 31 the Essene teacher tells his hearers that they are true disciples, if they continue to live in obedience to his *word;* that is, in obedience to what in the Psalms is called the commandments, the precepts, the testimonies, &c., &c., of the Law; and that (verse 32) by such obedience they shall know experimentally the truth, and the truth shall make them free; free from a blind dependence upon the mere verbal requirements of the Law, because, having learned the secret of the Lord they will live in its Spirit, and not in the mere Letter.

It may be well to remark, that the same doctrine or teaching may often be recognized, with a little attention, under a variety of forms or modes of expression. Thus, "to continue in my word," as expressed in verse 31 of this chapter, with the addition (verse 32) that those who do so shall know the truth, has the same import as the declaration in the preceding chapter, that those who "do his will," shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or of man;—that is, they shall know the truth.

John, Ch. VIII. 33. ¶ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed
and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou,
34. Ye shall be made free? 34. Jesus answered them, Verily,
verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin, is the
35. servant of sin. 35. And the servant abideth not in the
36. house for ever, *but* the Son abideth ever. 36. If the Son
therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Verses 33 to 36 place sin in contrast with the Son, Sin therefore representing or being the false, as opposed to the truth.

That the servant [that is, sin] abideth not in the house forever may signify that the pleasures of sin are temporary, while the joy of truth abideth ever; and the truth is expressed in the Law: and now we read (verse 36), If the Son [the Law, as the Truth] shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

In verse 32, it is the Truth that was to make them free. In verse 36 they are told that if the Son makes them free, they shall be free indeed: because the Son is the Law, conceived as the Truth,—as we read in the 119th Psalm: Thy Word [the Law] is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it. Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and *thy Law is the Truth.*

Thou art near, O LORD; and all *thy commandments* [in the Law] *are Truth.* The Truth of the Word, is the Word in its Spirit; and this is the HOLY ONE of Israel, the JUST ONE, the CHRIST of the New Testament, recognized as the Spirit of both the Old and the New Testaments.

JOHN, CH. VIII. 37. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye
38. seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. 38.
I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do
39. that which ye have seen with your father. 39. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus
saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would
40. do the works of Abraham. 40. But now ye seek to kill me,
a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of
41. God: this did not Abraham. 41. Ye do the deeds of your
father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornica-
42. tion; we have one Father, *even* God. 42. Jesus said unto
them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I
proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of my-
43. self, but he sent me. 43. Why do ye not understand my
44. speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. 44. Ye are
of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will
do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not
in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he
speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and
45. the father of it. 45. And because I tell *you* the truth, ye
46. believe me not. 46. Which of you convinceth me of sin?
47. And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47. He
that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them*
not, because ye are not of God.

Verse 37 answers the claim of the Pharisees to be of Abraham's seed, and free on that account, by saying that, Ye seek to kill [the Law, that is, the Spirit of the Law] because the Word, or the Truth "hath no place in you."

Verse 38 repeats, that the Law speaks that which is written in it by its Father, the Spirit of Truth; and charges the Pharisees with doing the works of the devil, —the devil being the personification of evil, said to be the Father of the Pharisees.

Verse 39 carries on the controversy by again representing the Pharisees as claiming to be Abraham's children: but this is answered by charging them (verse 40) with works unlike those of Abraham, who did not seek to kill the Spirit of the Law.

Verse 41. The Pharisees claim to have one Father, even GOD.

Verse 42 implies that they had no knowledge of the Father [the Spirit of Truth]; for, if they had, they would "love" the law, which "proceeded forth and came from GOD," and which did not come of itself, but was "sent" by GOD.

Verse 43. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word.

This language is mystical. Ye cannot *hear;* that is, ye cannot understand my word; meaning that the Pharisees could not understand the Law: for the object of this imaginary controversy was to hold forth, to the Essenes, the ignorance of the Pharisees.

Verse 44 contrasts, again, truth and falsehood; the devil, the personification of lying, being called the Father of lies: but,

Verse 45. The Law claims to tell the truth, as the Essenes believed; verse 46 reproaching the Pharisees for their disbelief.

Verse 47. He that is of God [that is, of the Truth], heareth [that is, understandeth] God's words [to wit, the words of the Law]: Ye, therefore [addressing the Pharisees], hear them not [that is, ye understand them not], because ye are not of God. They were not the followers or disciples of Truth, personified in Jesus.

John, Ch. VIII. 48. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him,
Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?
49. Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

Verse 48 refers to the Samaritans. Historical criticism has never been able to determine who the Samaritans were. The woman at the well (chapter iv.) is represented as a Samaritan, and as saying, that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; but who they were or in what relation they stood to the Jewish people, is not stated.

Jesus (verse 49) denies being under the influence of the devil, as charged in verse 48, and claims that, while he honors his Father, the Pharisees dishonor him; meaning that the Pharisees dishonor the Law, by not recognizing its Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth and the Father of the Law.

John, Ch. VIII. 50. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one
51. that seeketh and judgeth. 51. Verily, verily, I say unto
you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.
52. 52. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou
hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and
thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste
53. of death. 53. Art thou greater than our father Abraham,

which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest
54. thou thyself? 54. Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my
honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of
55. whom ye say, that he is your God. 55. Yet ye have not
known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know
him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him,
56. and keep his saying. 56. Your father Abraham rejoiced
57. to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. 57. Then
said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old,
58. and hast thou seen Abraham? 58. Jesus said unto them,
Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.
59. 59. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus
hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through
the midst of them, and so passed by.

Verse 50. And I seek not mine own glory: that is, the Law is impersonal, and neither seeks glory for itself, nor does any thing "of itself." There is One that seeketh and judgeth. This One is the Spirit of the Law, which is with the Law, and is said not to leave it alone; because it is in man and works in confirmation of the Law.

Verse 51. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

This is not said of the natural death of the body; for this is "appointed for all," and the question is, To what does it refer? The answer is, that death is a symbolic word for the state of man living, as the phrase is, without God, in the world; and this is to live without Truth. To depart from the Truth is to sin, and to sin is to die, in the sense of the sacred writers; and as the Law forbids sin, it is said that whoever keeps the sayings or precepts of the Law, shall not sin, and shall never see death.

Verse 52. But the Pharisees, as usual, are exhibited as taking this language literally, and they appeal to Abraham and others, who they assume lived in obedience to the Law, and yet were dead; and they ask (verse 53), Art thou greater than our father Abraham?

Jesus does not directly answer this; for we must keep in mind that we are reading a drama written mystically in order not to disclose openly a certain secret; which nevertheless was taught to those who had ears to hear.

Verse 54 uses the mystical language, founded on the unity of the Spirit of the Law, as the Father, with the Letter, which was dictated by the Spirit. This is followed up in verse 55: and verse 56 declares that Abraham had seen Jesus; meaning, that Abraham had seen, that is, he understood the Spirit of the Law; for to see the Spirit of the Law is to see Jesus, the expression *seeing* being metaphorical. This was not only possible before the Law was written, but was even necessary before it could have been written.

This again the Pharisees took literally, as usual, the drama throughout exhibiting their literal view in contrast to that of the Essenes. Accordingly, they are made to exclaim (verse 57), Thou are not fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Verse 58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am: for the Law, in its Spirit, is the eternal Word or Truth, and *was* before Abraham, the language here used being appropriated from Exodus iii. 14: I AM, hath sent me unto you.

Verse 59. Then took they up stones, &c.; but the Spirit of Truth is poetically represented as disappearing or going out through their *midst;* for, thus it is, indeed, that, when any one attempts violence against the Truth, the principle of Truth becomes unseen, and may be said to pass out, &c.

JOHN, CHAPTER IX.

John, Ch. IX. 1. And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was
2. blind from *his* birth. 2. And his disciples asked him, say-
ing, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he
3. was born blind? 3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man
sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should
4. be made manifest in him. 4. I must work the works of him
that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no
5. man can work. 5. As long as I am in the world, I am the
6. light of the world. 6. When he had thus spoken, he spat
on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed
7. the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7. And said unto
him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpre-
tation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed,
8. and came seeing. 8. ¶ The neighbours therefore, and
they which before had seen him that he was blind, said,
9. Is not this he that sat and begged? 9. Some said, This
is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he*.
10. 10. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes
11. opened? 11. He answered and said, A man that is called
Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto
me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and
12. washed, and I received sight. 12. Then said they unto
13. him, Where is he? He said, I know not. 13. ¶ They
brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.
14. 14. And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay,
15. and opened his eyes. 15. Then again the Pharisees also
asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto
them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do
16. see. 16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is
not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath-day. Others
said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?

17. And there was a division among them. 17. They say unto
the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he
hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.
18. 18. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he
had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the
19. parents of him that had received his sight. 19. And they
asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born
20. blind? How then doth he now see? 20. His parents
answered them and said, We know that this is our son,
21. and that he was born blind: 21. But by what means he
now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes,
we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for
22. himself. 22. These *words* spake his parents, because they
feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that
if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be
23. put out of the synagogue. 23. Therefore said his parents,
24. He is of age; ask him. 24. Then again called they the
man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the
25. praise: we know that this man is a sinner. 25. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know
not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I
26. see. 26. Then said they to him again, What did he to
27. thee? how opened he thine eyes? 27. He answered them,
I have told you already, ann ye did not hear: wherefore
would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?
28. 28. Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple;
29. but we are Moses' disciples. 29. We know that God spake
unto Moses; *as for* this *fellow*, we know not from whence
30. he is. 30. The man answered and said unto them, Why,
herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence
31. he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes. 31. Now we
know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a
worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.
32. 32. Since the world began was it not heard that any man
33. opened the eyes of one that was born blind. 33. If this
34. man were not of God, he could do nothing. 34. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in
sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.
35. 35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he
had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the

36. Son of God? 36. He answered and said, Who is he, Lord,
37. that I might believe on him? 37. And Jesus said unto
him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh
38. with thee. 38. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he
39. worshipped him. 39. ¶ And Jesus said, For judgment
I am come into this world; that they which see not might
40. see, and that they which see, might be made blind. 40. And
some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these
41. words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? 41. Jesus
said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin:
but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

THE 9th chapter is occupied with the miracle of curing a blind man; and an imaginary controversy is carried on, the object of which is still, as usual, to show the blindness, that is, the ignorance of the Pharisees, who nevertheless assumed to know or understand the Law; on account of which they are charged as sinners: whereas, if they were less presumptuous they would have less sin.

The blindness cured by the Spirit of Truth, or by the Law, is ignorance; the Law, in its Letter and Spirit, being symbolized by clay made of spittle and earth.

The pool of Siloam is itself a symbol of the Truth or of the Law, like the pool of Bethesda. In the 7th verse, we see that the name of the pool is interpreted as the *Sent;* a sufficient hint that it symbolizes the Law, the *sent* from GOD. The blind man was required to "wash," or bathe his soul in the spiritual waters of the Law.

This, according to the Essene point of view, was the proper cure for moral and spiritual ignorance.

We see in Isaiah, and elsewhere in the older writings, frequent allusions to the power of the Law, in its Spirit, in opening the eyes of the blind, in making the deaf to hear, and in giving speech to the dumb; and this is everywhere to be understood in a figurative sense. Even Moses says to the LORD,—I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. To which the LORD answers,—Who hath made man's mouth, &c.,—now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, &c. (Gen. iv. 10–12), the writer evidently using a figure of speech, and we see the same figurative language throughout the Scriptures; but in the New Testament it is dramatically exhibited in the form of a history, or rather as a species of parable.

In the "day" when the Truth comes in power, then, according to Isaiah, "the deaf shall hear [that is, they shall understand] the words of the Book [that is, the Book of the mysterious Law], and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness" (Isa. xxix. 18). Then also, "The meek shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor [in Spirit, the humble] among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (verse 19).

This is not a prophecy of an event to occur at a particular time and then to become historical. It is a prophecy for all time: and the Evangelists have merely represented it in the form of a history for the purpose of instruction.

The LORD, the Holy One of Israel, as here referred to, is the WISDOM, of which so much is said in the

Wisdom of Solomon, where we read (chapter x. verse 21), For Wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb, and made the tongues of them that cannot speak eloquent.

In this Book, WISDOM is described as having "in her an understanding Spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtle, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick [living], which cannot be letted [hindered], ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtle, spirits. For Wisdom is more moving than any motion: she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of GOD, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of GOD, and the image of his goodness. And being but One, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages [not confined to any particular age, but in all ages] entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of GOD and prophets."

We see portions of this description referred to CHRIST in the New Testament, especially in the Epistles of St. Paul, and hastily conclude that it was used in reference to a historical person, because a person was set forward in the gospels to represent it.

If we suppose the language, as used in the older writings, prophetic of a person, and that person to be the "MAN CHRIST JESUS," then how are we to understand the language which follows the above, in the 8th chapter of Wisdom.

1. Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily; and sweetly doth SHE order all things.

2. I loved HER, and sought HER out from my youth; I desired to make HER my spouse, and I was a lover of HER beauty.

3. In that SHE is conversant with GOD, SHE magnifieth her nobility: yea, the LORD of all things himself loved HER.

The LORD of all things here referred to, must have been Solomon the King of Israel, as being most applicable to him,—or to David, his father; it matters not which. That the king was called by the title, the Lord, we may see in many places,—And Beniah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, Amen: the LORD GOD of my lord the king say so too. As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be it with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David (1 Kings i. 36, 37). We may read, therefore, that the LORD of all things, or Solomon, loved Wisdom, and sought to make HER his spouse.

And what is the fruit of this love, but the Holy Spirit, the Holy One of Israel, the CHRIST of the New Testament;—whose mother is figured in Mary? In due time we shall see this Mary, this mother, this WISDOM, received at the foot of the cross by "the loved disciple," who takes her to his "own home" [that is, to his own *heart*].

But let us not anticipate this wonderful scene.

We repeat, in reference to this miracle,—the curing of the blind man in the 9th chapter,—that it is an artistic or dramatic representation of a purely spiritual operation, by which the veil is lifted from before the eyes of the natural man, and he then sees not supernaturally indeed, but spiritually; and yet this word is not intended to be used in any mysterious or fantastic sense.

The best method of seeing supernaturally, is to be perfectly natural in a pure simplicity.

JOHN, CHAPTER X.

JOHN, CH. X. 1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth
not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some
2. other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2. But he
that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep.
3. 3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his
voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth
4. them out. 4. And when he putteth forth his own sheep,
he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they
5. know his voice. 5. And a stranger will they not follow,
but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of
6. strangers. 6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but
they understood not what things they were which he spake
7. unto them. 7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily,
8. verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. All
that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but
9. the sheep did not hear them. 9. I am the door: by me
if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and
10. out, and find pasture. 10. The thief cometh not, but for
to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they
might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.
11. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd
12. giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling,
and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not,
seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth;
and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.
13. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and
14. careth not for the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd,
15. and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. 15. As the
Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay
16. down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have,
which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and

they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and*
17. one shepherd. 17. Therefore doth my Father love me,
because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
18. 18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.
I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it
again. This commandment have I received of my Father.
19. 19. ¶ There was a division therefore again among the
20. Jews for these sayings. 20. And many of them said, He
21. hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? 21. Others
said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.
22. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? 22. ¶ And it
was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was
23. winter. 23. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's
24. porch. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and
said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt?
25. If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered
them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do
26. in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26. But
ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said
27. unto you. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,
28. and they follow me: 28. And I give unto them eternal
life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck
29. them out of my hand. 29. My Father, which gave *them*
me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck *them* out
30. of my Father's hand. 30. I and *my* Father are one.
31. 31. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.
32. 32. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed
you from my Father; for which of those works do ye
33. stone me? 33. The Jews answered him, saying, For a
good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and
because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.
34. 34. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I
35. said, Ye are gods? 35. If he called them gods, unto whom
the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be bro-
36. ken; 36. Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified,
and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I
37. said, I am the Son of God? 37. If I do not the works of
38. my Father, believe me not. 38. But if I do, though ye
believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and
39. believe that the Father *is* in me, and I in him. 39. There-
fore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out

40. of their hand, 40. And went away again beyond Jordan,
into the place where John at first baptized; and there
41. he abode. 41. And many resorted unto him, and said,
John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of
42. this man were true. 42. And many believed on him there.

THE figurative character of the opening verses of the 10th chapter is so manifest that the most careless reader cannot fail to see it. The *door*, the *shepherd*, and the *sheep*, are, of course, figurative expressions, and the point is, to determine to what they refer.

In verse 6, that which has been said is called a parable, and it is followed by what purports to be an interpretation: but the interpretation itself is parabolical; for we must still discover in what sense CHRIST is a *door*, and who the *sheep* are, &c.

The Hebrew sacred Law is the door through which those who hear, that is, those who understand its teachings or commandments, may enter into life, understanding by life a state of truth, virtue, righteousness, or holiness; this being the Holy Land, or the Land of Promise to the faithful; or, we may call it charity, in the sense of love, the end of the Law, according to St. Paul.

CHRIST must be considered as speaking in the name of the Law, but the Law must be regarded as twofold, external and internal; or, as written, and as the Spirit in which it is written. The Spirit is the Father of the Letter, and both, being personified, are said (verse 15) to know each other, the Letter speaking; that is, containing, as written, only what the Spirit of Truth had dictated.

While the Law may be called the door, the door to the Law is, again, the Spirit of Truth, through which one may go in and out, and find pasture (verse 9); that is, in the Spirit of Truth one may go in and out [of the Law] and find pasture [or spiritual food]. The Scriptures are regarded as a sealed book to all who approach them in any other than a Spirit of Truth; but to this Spirit their sense becomes open, because they were written in that Spirit.

The mystical language of the 17th and 18th verses, about laying down life and taking it again, must be understood by considering that the Law was regarded as life to those who obeyed it, but death to those who "despised" or disobeyed it. It was thus said to kill and to make alive, to wound and to heal—it wounds those who offend [against] it, but heals those who "turn" to it; and the language in question merely assumes its effects to itself, as if the Law itself was killed or made alive in the death or life of those it acted upon.

To understand this we must see how the Jew looked upon the Law as life to those who obeyed it, or to those who are said to have found the wisdom or Spirit of the Law.

Thus, as in Proverbs xiii. 14, The Law of the wise, meaning the Law of Moses, is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death; meaning the snares of sin, for sin is death. In the same sense the preceding verse of the same chapter reads: Whoso despiseth the Word [the Word of the Law] shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment [of Moses], shall be rewarded. To fear the commandments and to fear GOD were all one to a pious Jew, who referred the Law immediately to GOD. Hence, the language of Proverbs xiv. 27 has the same meaning as that just recited: The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

The Law was looked upon as life, because it gave life to its followers; that is, it freed them from sin, called the snares of death. The Law is said to live when it is obeyed: but when it is disobeyed, it is figuratively said to die; whereas it is the sinner who dies, and not the Law, whose life is the eternal Word.

When this is appropriated, its possessor feels an assurance of immortality, which it referred to GOD, in whom the Word is life, and then this confidence in life expresses itself in the language (Psalm xvi. 10), Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. This was not said of an historical person, to appear at some unnamed future period, but it was said of the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, called by John the true light. The seeming death and resurrection of CHRIST shadow out this mystery: it is not the mystery itself. But we will not anticipate.

The question (verse 24), How long dost thou make us doubt? is a dramatic form of expressing the query, as to the meaning of the Law. The answer, in verse 25, is only another form of the declaration in chapter

vii. verse 17, that, If any man will do [what the Law requires], he shall know, &c.

The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me (verse 25), means the works which the Law does in the hearts of those who "do" what the Law requires.

This is the constant appeal in proof of the divine character of the Law—that its works in the soul are beneficent and divine.

Verses 37 and 38 distinctly put the Law, for the proof of its divinity, upon the character of its works; and the Jews were told, that if the works were not those of the Father, meaning the Spirit of Truth, they were not required to believe; and this is the precise form in which the Bible itself, at this day, is offered by some inspired preachers.

But it should be borne in mind throughout this inquiry that the written Word stands related to the unwritten Word, as John the Baptist is related to Christ. This relation is that of water to fire; and yet the invisible Spirit is but symbolized by fire.

This is the Father: and the Law, speaking in the Letter, says (verse 29), My Father is greater than all.

Notwithstanding this declaration, we read in the very next verse the words, I and my Father are one.

This 30th verse of the 10th chapter has been made something of a corner-stone in support of a particular doctrine of modern times, much discussed in the Church; but this is because it is expressed in this chapter without the explanations connected with it in the 17th chapter, where we find the same doctrine (verse 11); but the whole chapter explains the sense in which the words are to be understood, as we shall notice when we come to it.

It is sufficient here to observe that the one-ness affirmed in this 30th verse is not a one-ness of identity, but of harmony. It is the harmony of the Law with its Spirit, as the Spirit of Truth, the Letter as the Baptist, being still inferior to the Spirit as CHRIST.

We may be assured that this is the true sense by many passages which teach the same thing, though in figurative language. Thus, in chapter xiii. 16, we read that, The servant [the written Law] is not greater than his Lord [the Spirit of the Law]; neither he that is sent [the written Word] greater than he that sent him [the Spirit again]. This is referred to again (chapter xv. 20), where the disciples are warned thus: Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant [the written Law] is not greater than his Lord. In chapter xiv. 28 we read also the words, My Father is greater than I—where the meaning is the same. It is the Law which, in its Spirit, is greater than the Letter. The Letter, again, is the friend [chapter iii. 29], while the Spirit is the bridegroom.

Almost the whole circle of ideas in the gospel turns upon the Law, as Letter and Spirit, which are one; and yet the Spirit is greater than the Letter.

That this unity depends upon a higher unity, is a profounder truth still; where, indeed, the Father is seen to be greater than all; for the Law is not the Light it teaches or witnesses, but a symbol of it.

To give eternal life as expressed in verse 28 of this 10th chapter, means to give protection against sin, in the sense just shown from Proverbs, where the Law is called a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Life is not used in these passages of Scripture as the opposite to physical death, for all men die; but it is used in antithesis to the moral death by sin. To abide in the Law, is a security against sin; and this is to live, in the sense of the gospel. The hope of it may be called the Baptist; but the realization of it is CHRIST,—whose shoe's latchet the Baptist is not worthy to unloose.

In this 10th chapter the Law excuses itself for taking the name of the Son of GOD (verses 35, 36); but, at the same time, gives freedom of faith in verse 37, If I do not the works of [the Spirit of Truth] believe me not.

The test here, as elsewhere, is that of obedience (verse 38).

But then, as the Jews (verse 39) "sought to take him," CHRIST is represented as escaping and going to the place where John at first baptized. This means, that when the truth is not seen, and is used despitefully, it retires into the Letter; for John, baptizing beyond Jordan (John i. 28), represents the Letter.

The declaration in verse 41, And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle—means that the Letter does nothing of itself. The language in addition—But all things that John spake of this man were true, signifies that the testimony or witness of the Letter is true. John, as a person, says nothing of CHRIST as a person, calling for this reference, which, in fact, is only another form of the language of CHRIST himself in ch. viii. 14, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record [that is, the writing] is true [in what it testifies of the Spirit].

It should be observed that the same test, that of obedience, is called for in Christendom which, in the present explanation, appears as applied to the Law; and very properly so: for experience must be the test in the one case as well as in the other, the Law and the gospel being one in Spirit.

If the gospel be regarded as the spiritual exposition of the Law, then it is the spiritual sense; and this is the Father of the Law, and of one nature with the Law.

If, again, the gospel be regarded in the Letter, then, as this Letter was conceived also in the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit that "moved the holy men of old" who wrote the earlier Scriptures, the unity or harmony of the Spirit and the Letter must be acknowledged here also; and thus we may see the unity of the Law and of the gospel, whether regarded in the Letter or in the Spirit; the higher unity however being still acknowledged as the principle of all truth, related to the whole Letter as fire is to water, or as love is to duty, or, finally, as heaven is to earth.

JOHN, CHAPTER XI.

John, Ch. XI. 1. Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus,
of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.
2. 2. (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with oint-
ment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Laza-
3. rus was sick.) 3. Therefore his sisters sent unto him, say-
4. ing, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. When
Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death,
but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be
5. glorified thereby. 5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her
6. sister, and Lazarus. 6. When he had heard therefore
that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place
7. where he was. 7. Then after that saith he to *his* disciples,
8. Let us go into Judea again. 8. *His* disciples say unto him,
Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest
9. thou thither again? 9. Jesus answered, Are there not
twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day,
he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this
10. world. 10. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth,
11. because there is no light in him. 11. These things said
he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus
sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.
12. 12. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do
13. well. 13. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they
thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.
14. 14. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.
15. 15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to
the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto
16. him. 16. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus,
unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die
17. with him. 17. Then when Jesus came, he found that he
18. had *lain* in the grave four days already. 18. (Now Bethany

was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:)
19. 19. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to
20. comfort them concerning their brother. 20. Then Martha,
as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met
21. him: but Mary sat *still* in the house. 21. Then said Mar-
tha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother
22. had not died. 22. But I know that even now, whatsoever
23. thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. 23. Jesus
24. saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24. Martha
saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resur-
25. rection at the last day. 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the
resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though
26. he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. And whosoever liveth,
and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?
27. 27. She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art
the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the
28. world. 28. And when she had so said, she went her way,
and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is
29. come, and calleth for thee. 29. As soon as she heard
30. *that* she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30. Now
Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that
31. place where Martha met him. 31. The Jews then which
were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they
saw Mary that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed
her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.
32. 32. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw
him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if
33. thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 33. When
Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weep-
ing which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was
34. troubled, 34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They
35. say unto him, Lord, come and see. 35. Jesus wept.
36. 36. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!
37. 37. And some of them said, Could not this man, which
opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man
38. should not have died? 38. Jesus therefore again groan-
ing in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a
39. stone lay upon it. 39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone.
Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him,
Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four
40. days. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that

if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of
41. God? 41. Then they took away the stone *from the place*
where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes,
and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me:
42. 42. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because
of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may be-
43. lieve that thou hast sent me. 43. And when he thus had
spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
44. 44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and
foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with
a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.
45. 45. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had
46. seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46. But
some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told
47. them what things Jesus had done. 47. ¶ Then gathered
the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said,
48. What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48. If
we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and
the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and
49. nation. 49. And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the
high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know noth-
50. ing at all, 50. Nor consider that it is expedient for us,
that one man should die for the people, and that the whole
51. nation perish not. 51. And this spake he not of himself:
but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus
52. should die for that nation; 52. And not for that nation
only, but that also he should gather together in one the
53. children of God that were scattered abroad. 53. Then
from that day forth they took counsel together for to put
54. him to death. 54. Jesus therefore walked no more openly
among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to
the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there con-
55. tinued with his disciples. 55. ¶ And the Jews' passover
was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up
to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.
56. 56. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among them-
selves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that
57. he will not come to the feast? 57. Now both the chief
priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that,
if any man knew where he were, he should shew *it*, that
they might take him.

IN the 11th chapter of John we read of the raising of Lazarus—a miracle recorded by neither of the other Evangelists, and not alluded to by St. Paul, nor by any other of the New Testament writers.

There are many remarkable peculiarities connected with the record of this miracle; one being the fact that Luke, in chapter x. 38–42, refers to both Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, without speaking of the brother, as Lazarus is called in John, whose history, taken literally, is so wonderful! Matthew also records a scene in which Mary is exhibited (ch. xxvi. 6–13), as in a portion of the story in John, but not by name. She is called simply "a woman"—the story being repeated in Mark xiv. 3–9.

If the story is historical, as we read it in John, how is it conceivable that Matthew, Mark, and Luke should refer to some of the parties, and some of the incidents in it, and yet say nothing of Lazarus, the principal figure in the story?

The language introducing the story, in John, is remarkable when considered as history, though it is quite usual in Scripture.

Now a *certain* (?) man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the *town* of Mary and her sister Martha.

We see here that Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were of the same *town*.

In Scripture symbolism, man is often called a *town*, as he is called also a city, a house, &c. We have seen that Philip was of Bethsaida, the *city* of Andrew and Peter—in all probability referring to but one person, embracing many spiritual elements personified as so many persons.

The body and the soul are often spoken of in Scripture as brethren, or as sisters, and also as husband and wife, &c.; and man is likewise spoken of as a triple nature, Body, Soul, and Spirit—the latter being conceived as "the common in all." This is the Mary of the allegory. She is the mother of Jesus; and we see her sitting "still" in the *house*, of which Lazarus and Martha may be the other two principals—she sits "still" in the *house* until called by Jesus, who represents the Spirit, the Spirit being moved alone by the Spirit.

In Matthew viii. 14, 15, we have an instance in which man is referred to as a *house*. Christ is represented as entering the *house* of Peter, where he restores Peter's wife's mother, who was sick.

This is pure symbolism. Peter's house is Peter himself; his wife is his *faith*, a daughter of the [then] visible Church, [who] was sick. The Spirit of Truth enters Peter himself and restores *his* conceptions of the Church.

Faith may be genuine or sincere, when the external Church is not so: or, if we see this in the single individual, the *heart* may be right, in a moral sense, when the *opinion* of the external Church is intellectually erroneous.

Hence the cure is said to be wrought upon the mother; for, in symbolism, the Church is called a mother.

The Church is twofold, visible and invisible, just as the Law is twofold, Letter and Spirit, the Spirit being common to the two; in which sense, the Spirit is the invisible Church, "the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26). The Law and the Church are related as is the bridegroom and the bride, the Church being the bride of the LORD. Their child, the mysterious child, is the Son, as referred to the Law; but as referred to the Church, the child is *faith*, the daughter of the Church. But the *faith* preached by St. Paul (Romans x. 8) is the Son of Mary, who is the Spirit as seen in both the Law and the Church.

The invisible Church is not subject to sickness, but is the principle, on the contrary, through which a sick external Church may be restored; just as the same principle changes the water into wine—that is, the Letter into Spirit.

As we see that Peter's *house* is himself, so we are disposed to see the *town* of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary as one person of Body, Soul, and Spirit; and are quite sure that this mode of regarding the subject will throw light upon the chapter under consideration.

The Mary of this one person is the Spirit, the principle represented by CHRIST himself, as the Son of GOD.

The three principles may be called or treated as three men, or as three women, or as one man and two women, or one woman and two men; and it might be well for the student to bear this in mind while reading the Scriptures.

If there could be a grade in miracles, the raising of Lazarus might be considered the greatest miracle recorded in the gospels; but no gradation in miracles is conceivable. Turning water into wine, except by a natural process through the grape, would be as great a miracle as the raising into life of one who had been dead four days, and whose body had given evidence of decomposition.

The turning of water into wine is a mere symbolic, written, and not acted miracle. It signifies or illustrates the power of truth, by which the Spirit of the Letter becomes visible, or, in the language of the gospel, *manifested.* In this opinion we may readily acquiesce, when we see that the early Fathers so interpreted the miracle at Cana of Galilee;—not that we should receive such an interpretation simply upon their authority, but upon their suggestion we may receive it because it is reasonable.

If the Fathers credited the story in its literal sense, besides giving a spiritual interpretation to it—though we know that some of them did not—we are not bound to follow them in such an evidence of their want of knowledge of the perfection and permanence of the order of Providence in the course of events in the world. Science had not, in their day, set forward the principle of the order of nature, as an irrefragable postulate, the most important that can be conceived in natural philosophy, as being the one condition alone without which science would be impossible.

However exalted our opinion of religious truth may be, as being above science, it cannot be of such a nature as to place science and religion in opposition to each other without detriment to the latter. Religion may be an exaltation of nature above the vision of science in the natural world; but whoever would place it in opposition to science, must expect to find himself in conflict with one of the best-established intuitions acknowledged among cultivated men of modern times; that which asserts a certain unchangeable order in the dispensations of Providence, commonly called among men of science, the order of nature.

Whoever denies this order, denies the intuitions of his own intellect, and virtually denies to himself the right of inquiry into all subjects of whatsoever sort they may be.

The very nature of inquiry presupposes an unchangeable order and connection of things in nature, corresponding to the order and connection of ideas from any postulate founded in nature, as the root of science,—a postulate, as such, being of course indemonstrable.

In this examination, therefore, it is assumed, that a miracle, under the definition of a disturbance of the order of nature, is impossible. When we say that all things are possible with God, we mean,—all things that are not in contradiction to [his] nature; for we must not say that God can do any thing contrary to himself: and when we say that all things are possible with God, we ought to add, that nothing is possible without God; for by thus enclosing the truth in a double affirmation, as it were, we may, perhaps, have the better idea of it.

A so-called miracle must therefore be treated as a parable. It was never absolutely acted, but only written; and it was written for the purpose of teaching some doctrine by symbolism,—the question being, in all cases, as to what the doctrine is, which was intended to be taught.

In the 5th chapter of John (verse 24), we are furnished the true key to the miracle of raising Lazarus.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word [that is, he that understandeth the Law], and believeth on him that sent me [the Spirit of the Law], hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

We may see by this, that the living were considered as dead while not living in the Law. Therefore the miracle of raising one from the dead means, the restoration to reason and truth of one, in the language of St. Paul, dead in trespasses and sins; or, as in the parable of the Prodigal Son, whose return to duty is described by CHRIST as a return from death to life:—"This, my son, was dead and is alive again." These are strong expressions; but not any too strong when the nature of sin becomes known as interposing a veil between the soul and GOD, which, in some cases, can only be removed by an actual death.

But, while the miracle of raising the dead may teach the restoration to virtue of one apparently lost to moral truth, it may have been used also to teach the doctrine of immortality. The literal sense being denied, we are at liberty to interpret the miracle in either sense, according as we may recognize the truth of nature.

With these remarks, the story of the raising of Lazarus may be left for the study of those who may perceive in it illustrations of nature in its various phases; answering questions, as to why there were three principal figures, Lazarus and two sisters, one being Mary who had chosen "the better part," and who sat *still* in the house (verse 20), until called by the Spirit of Truth: why a stone (on the heart?) is spoken of, &c., &c.

What is this stone, at both the grave of Lazarus, and at the sepulchre where the *body* of CHRIST had been laid, but a symbol of the weight which presses upon a doubting unspiritual mind before it is raised to the light of truth?

It is proper to remark especially upon verses 25 and 26,—I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth, shall never die.

These words, taken literally, carry no sense with them; for it is impossible to conceive how one who is dead can be said to believe; and we know of no instance in the history of man in which such a case has been illustrated—since all men do actually die, Lazarus included.

This miracle, therefore, upon a literal interpretation, must remain an isolated, unproductive fact. But, from the point of view assumed above, that life stands opposed to sin, which is death, we may see that CHRIST [that is, the Law] works a resurrection to life on the morally dead: it not only may bring to life one who is dead in trespasses and sins, but may save from sin [that is, from death] one who lives, or has not sinned and believes—obedience being always implied. For the Law forbids sin, and therefore obedience to the Law is salvation or protection against sin, and against death by sin.

The language (verses, 21 and 32), LORD, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died,—means, that, if the Law had been present and influential over Lazarus, he had not died, in the sense above explained.

That Lazarus is not expressly described as a sinner, is no objection to this view; for all men, in their unawakened state, are considered in Scripture as dead,—as we see in the language, Let the dead bury their dead. Nature and grace are treated as if related to each other as water is to fire, body to blood, bread to wine, death to life, &c.

The place where Lazarus was laid, is said (verse 38) to have been a *cave;* and this may remind the reader that many of the most beautiful classical fables of antiquity represent, or symbolize man as a cave,—not to speak particularly of the celebrated cave in Plato's Republic.

The verses of chapter xi. from 47 to 54, show the progress of the drama (which is to include the tragedy on Mount Calvary), by exhibiting the rising hostility of the Pharisees, who, judging after the flesh [the Letter, chapter viii. 15], are made to tremble for their "places" (verse 48), if any other than a literal sense is allowed to be taught.

Unfortunately, the truth of this picture is verified in the constant history of the external Church,—upon which, however, there is no disposition to dwell. When a man fears the loss of his *place*, more than he loves the truth, he is a Pharisee,—no matter to what denomination of Christians he may attach himself.

JOHN, CHAPTER XII.

John, Ch. XII. 1. Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came
to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom
2. he raised from the dead. 2. There they made him a supper;
and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them
3. that sat at the table with him. 3. Then took Mary a pound
of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the
feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the
4. house was filled with the odour of the ointment. 4. Then
saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which
5. should betray him, 5. Why was not this ointment sold
6. for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6. This
he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he
was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.
7. 7. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my
8. burying hath she kept this. 8. For the poor always ye
9. have with you; but me ye have not always. 9. Much
people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and
they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might
see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.
10. 10. ¶ But the chief priests consulted that they might put
11. Lazarus also to death; 11. Because that by reason of
him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.
12. 12. ¶ On the next day, much people that were come to
the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,
13. 13. Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth
to meet him, and cried, Hosanna; Blessed *is* the King of
14. Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14. And
Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it
15. is written, 15. Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy
16. King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. 16. These things
understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus

was glorified, then remembered they that these things
were written of him, and *that* they had done these things
17. unto him. 17. The people therefore that was with him
when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him
18. from the dead, bare record. 18. For this cause the peo-
ple also met him, for that they heard that he had done
19. this miracle. 19. The Pharisees therefore said among
themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold,
20. the world is gone after him. 20. ¶ And there were certain
Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast.
21. 21. The same came therefore to Philip, which was of
Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we
22. would see Jesus. 22. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew:
23. and again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. 23. ¶ And Jesus
answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son
24. of man should be glorified. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto
you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,
it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
25. 25. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth
26. his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. 26.
If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am,
there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him
27. will *my* Father honour. 27. Now is my soul troubled;
and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour:
28. but for this cause came I unto this hour. 28. Father,
glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven,
saying, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.
29. 29. The people therefore that stood by, and heard *it*,
said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spake to
30. him. 30. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not
31. because of me, but for your sakes. 31. Now is the judg-
ment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be
32. cast out. 32. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will
33. draw all *men* unto me. 33. (This he said, signifying what
34. death he should die.) 34. The people answered him, We
have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever:
and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?
35. Who is this Son of man? 35. Then Jesus said unto them,
Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye
have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that
36. walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36.

While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be
the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and de-
37. parted, and did hide himself from them. 37. ¶ But
though he had done so many miracles before them, yet
38. they believed not on him: 38. That the saying of Esaias
the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who
hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the
39. Lord been revealed? 39. Therefore they could not be-
40. lieve, because that Esaias said again, 40. He hath blind-
ed their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should
not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart,
41. and be converted, and I should heal them. 41. These
things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of
42. him. 42. ¶ Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also
many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they
did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the
43. synagogue: 43. For they loved the praise of men more
44. than the praise of God. 44. ¶ Jesus cried, and said, He
that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that
45. sent me: 45. And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent
46. me. 46. I am come a light into the world, that whoso-
47. ever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47.
And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge
him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save
48. the world. 48. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not
my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I
have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.
49. 49. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father
which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should
50. say, and what I should speak. 50. And I know that his
commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak
therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

The 12th chapter furnishes many confirmations of the method of interpretation adopted in this work.

We purposely leave unnoticed the variations in the four accounts of the supper (Matthew xx. 6; Mark xiv.; Luke vii.; and here in John xii.). The presence of Lazarus is noticed only in John. His being seated at the table with Jesus, indicates that he had received the truth, which had raised him from the dead,—as explained in the remarks upon the preceding chapter. "He that is perfect shall be as his Master" (Luke vi. 40).

From verse 12 to 16, we read of the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, sitting upon an ass; which the disciples "understood not at first." We are not to suppose that this was done in fulfilment of a passage, not very accurately quoted, from Zechariah ix. 9, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

By looking at the passage in Zechariah and observing the connection in which it is used, it is impossible to recognize any thing like a prophecy of the event recorded in John; and here, as in many other places, we must consider that the Evangelist has merely appropriated a figure which he saw had been used in the older writings.

The gospels were written by men intimately acquainted with the older sacred Scriptures; and as their object was to illustrate, though mystically, the sense, or real meaning of those writings, they had it entirely in their power to make as many scenes as they pleased, and refer them to the Scripture as if in fulfilment of prophecy, though in all such cases the real design was to refer the student to the older writings for a study of their true meaning.

To understand what is meant by such references in the gospel we must seek the meaning of the prophet in his own writings, looking at the gospel only as a mystical commentary or illustration of the earlier writings.

CHRIST is not a historical fulfilment of prophecy, but an ideal representation of the meaning of the Law and the prophets. What, then, is the meaning of his riding into Jerusalem on an ass?

Jerusalem, as a geographical city, was no more holy than any other city; but, in the divine drama, Jerusalem is the terminus of the journey from Egypt. It stands for the close of the passage from nature to grace. It is called a holy city, because holiness is the consummation of a divine life; and, as we see the Spirit of Truth symbolized or figured under certain characteristics, innocence and truth, represented by the Lamb and the Dove, so its *lowliness* or humility is represented by an animal on which earthly kings are rarely seated.

This may be a suitable commentary upon the passage, blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,—which they are said to enter, riding upon an ass!

Everywhere in Scripture we read what may be called commentaries upon the fall of Lucifer and its cause; as, in the dispersion at Babel, the story of Haman, &c., down to the maxim, that pride goeth before a fall, and a haughty spirit before destruction: and we see everywhere, also, the blessings pronounced upon the meek and the lowly,—Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.

This is one interpretation; but we are at liberty to see more than one meaning in a symbol, and another sense for the representation in John distinctly rises before the author which he is quite willing to suggest, if only he could find adequate language for it.

Let the reader ask himself, whether the verity of this subject would be compromised by a supposition expressed in this question,—may not the bodily tenement of the soul become, under suitable conditions, a proper vehicle, which both *carries and is carried by a Holy Spirit* into the "place" which GOD has "promised" to those who obey his commandments?—and now, can we not see why CHRIST is represented as entering Jerusalem upon an ass?

We are not seeking *literal* difficulties; if we were, we might here ask the reader to compare the relative places, in the several gospels, of the two events, the entrance into Jerusalem, and the driving out of the temple the money changers.

The drama makes a distinct progress at verse 24, by the simile of the corn of wheat; for the writer of the gospel looks forward to the scene by which he intends to illustrate, after the method of all the ancient esoteric societies, the doctrine of immortality.

The teaching now becomes more and more spiritual and solemn.

But notwithstanding the [spiritual] miracles of the

Law, the Jews (verse 37), who judged after the flesh [the Letter], could not believe in its divinity; as the Essenes did, who called the Law the Son of GOD, and personified it as speaking from verse 44 to the close of the chapter.

If we were professedly considering a historical account of CHRIST, we might ask how it came to pass that, in the 36th verse, JESUS is represented as hiding himself, and then (verse 44) suddenly appearing and abruptly crying—He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. But we are not making a verbal criticism, and pass at once to the meaning of this passage, which is—He that believeth in the Law, believeth not simply in the Law, but in the Spirit of Truth in which the Law was conceived: and (verse 45) he that seeth the Law, seeth (metaphorically speaking) the Spirit that dictated it.

The declaration (verse 42), that many of the chief rulers believed on JESUS, means that many of those in power understood the doctrine of the Holy One of Israel; but (verse 43), as they loved their places and the praise of men more than the praise of GOD, they made no open confession of the Truth—a course of conduct illustrated at all times in the history of the world.

Verse 46. I [the Law] am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

And (verse 47) if any man hear [or reads] the words in the Law, and believes not, the Law does not judge him: for the Law came not to judge the world but to save the world.

Verse 48. He that rejecteth [the Law], and receiveth not its words [or commandments] hath one that judgeth him.

The One here referred to, is the invisible Spirit "among" us all, which the Law was "sent" to make known; and its representative, Christ, is made here to point to the last day or the close of life, when all human veils shall be removed and the soul will then know that the Law was given in the Spirit of Truth for the salvation of man.

The impersonality of the Law is again set forward (verse 49), For I [the Law] have not spoken of myself; but the Father [the Spirit of Truth, that dictated the Law] which sent me, he gave me a commandment [that is, he wrote in me], what I should say, and what I should speak. And (verse 50) I know [this is the Essene teacher, expressing his own faith in the sacredness of the Law, I know], that his commandment [its belief and practice] is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore [that is, whatsoever is read in the Law], even as the Father [the Spirit of Truth] said unto me, so I speak.

And we may add here that the Hebrew sacred writings always speak in the same manner, saying the same it said from the beginning (ch. viii. 25).

This will seem a strange and wholly inadmissible paraphrase to one who does not recognize in the gospels a symbolical mode of teaching a certain doctrine, held as a secret by the members of a society sworn not to disclose the secret, and sworn even not to write of it, " except in allegory and symbolism," as asserted by Philo.

The secret itself referred to the Hebrew sacred Law, as having an internal sense, which was brought to light by regarding the Law as an animate creature, the Letter being the body and the internal sense the soul. The Law must be considered not only as alive, but as having a divine life, by which it became, through its commandments, conceived in the Spirit of Truth, the salvation of man from generation to generation, as expressed in Isaiah; or, the Saviour of the world, as we read in later writings—the Law being, in fact, the basis of all of the Scriptures: only, in the New Testament, its spiritual sense or life is more prominently exhibited in Christ than in any of the prior writings. This diversity, if it is one, can give trouble only to a literalist, who insists that the writings themselves, as writings, are supernatural. To one who accepts the writings as water, and seeks their sense in the Spirit of Truth, there can be no serious difficulty in reconciling the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount with the older writings, representing an earlier period of the world.

JOHN, CHAPTER XIII.

John, Ch. XIII. 1. Now before the feast of the passover, when
Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart
out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own
2. which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2.
And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into
the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him,)
3. 3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into
his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to
4. God; 4. He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments;
5. and took a towel, and girded himself. 5. After
that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash
the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith
6. he was girded. 6. Then cometh he to Simon Peter:
and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?
7. 7. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou
8. knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8. Peter
saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus
answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with
9. me. 9. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet
10. only, but also *my* hands and *my* head. 10. Jesus saith
to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his*
feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not
11. all. 11. For he knew who should betray him; therefore
12. said he, Ye are not all clean. 12. So after he had washed
their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down
again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to
13. you? 13. Ye call me Master, and Lord; and ye say well;
14. for *so* I am. 14. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have
washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's
15. feet. 15. For I have given you an example, that ye
16. should do as I have done to you. 16. Verily, verily, I say

unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither
17. he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17. If ye
18. know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. 18. ¶ I
speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but
that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread
19. with me, hath lifted up his heel against me. 19. Now I
tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye
20. may believe that I am *he*. 20. Verily, verily, I say unto
you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me;
and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.
21. 21. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and
testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one
22. of you shall betray me. 22. Then the disciples looked
23. one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23. Now
there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples,
24. whom Jesus loved. 24. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to
him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he
25. spake. 25. He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto
26. him, Lord, who is it? 26. Jesus answered, He it is to
whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And
when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot
27. *the son* of Simon. 27. And after the sop Satan entered
into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do
28. quickly. 28. Now no man at the table knew for what
29. intent he spake this unto him. 29. For some *of them*
thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said
unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against
the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.
30. 30. He then, having received the sop, went immediately
31. out: and it was night. 31. ¶ Therefore, when he was
gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and
32. God is glorified in him. 32. If God be glorified in him,
God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway
33. glorify him. 33. Little children, yet a little while I am
with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the
Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say to you.
34. 34. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love
one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one
35. another. 35. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my
36. disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36. ¶ Simon
Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus

answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me
37. now; but thou shalt follow me afterward. 37. Peter said
unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay
38. down my life for thy sake. 38. Jesus answered him,
Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily,
I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast
denied me thrice.

The 1st verse of the 13th chapter indicates the tendency of the drama towards its closing scene. The hour has come for the Spirit of Truth to depart out of the world unto the Father. In other cases, when the Spirit is persecuted, "sought to be taken," &c., the purposes of the drama are answered by describing the Spirit as departing out through the *midst* of its enemies (ch. viii. 59), or as taking refuge in the Letter, indicated by saying (ch. x. 40), that he went away into the place where John at first baptized.

But now the writer of the gospel intends to show, dramatically, the death of the Spirit, as killed or crushed by the formalisms and superstitions of the Pharisees, the followers of the Letter, with whom we have hitherto seen Christ in constant contention.

The author's opinion on this point is presented in the Twelfth Section of the preceding Part, and he will not dwell upon it here.

In the 2d verse of the chapter under consideration, Judas is brought forward as the betrayer.

It may have been designed to make Judas, his name coming from Juda, the representative of the Jews, who, as a body, with their Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, had, as the Essenes believed, killed the Spirit of the Jewish religion. We say this may be so, but do not insist upon it.

The end of the drama is but barely indicated in this chapter, in which the teaching proceeds, constantly becoming, if possible, more and more spiritual.

In this chapter we have the symbolic scene of washing the feet of the disciples, with the remark to Peter by the Spirit of Truth (verse 8), If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me,—which means that, unless the external life (represented by the feet) is washed or purified by the Spirit of Truth, no one can have any part in it.

Verse 17. If ye know [that is, if ye understand] these things, happy are ye if ye do them,—meaning the same thing as above ; for we see everywhere in the gospels, that a perfect life is not found in theory, but in practice. He is the true disciple who *doeth* the will of the Father —that is, the true disciple obeys the Law or lives in its Spirit.

Verse 18 is dramatic. The author of the gospel knows, in advance, the course of the drama ; its origin and object. He knows who are to be made the instruments of the contemplated tragedy.

Many refined meanings may be discovered in several portions of this chapter, but we will not go too much into detail.

In this chapter we have the beautiful test commandment (verse 34), A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

If the Christian world be tried by this doctrine, as a test of fellowship with the Spirit of Truth, there is great reason to fear, that the disciples might not be more numerous now than in the days of the Apostles. But let every one consider this for himself.

Love may be *passionate* between two persons, having regard, each to the other ; but it cannot be *perfect*, unless the two love each other in a third principle—which every student must discover for himself.

We may see how love becomes a mediator when justice becomes the object of it. Two men seeking the possession of something which but one can have, will contend violently and often destructively ; but if we suppose the two men to love justice before all other things, they will soon bring their contention to an end ; for neither will ask or require any thing but what the other is not only ready but anxious to grant. If, now, we consider justice the most absolute reality in the universe, in no manner subject to the will, whim, or caprice of man, we shall soon begin to understand how the real interest of man becomes merged in this absolute reality.

JOHN, CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN, CH. XIV. 1. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in
2. God, believe also in me. 2. In my Father's house are
many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you.
3. I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare
a place for you, I will come again and receive you
unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.
4. 4. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.
5. 5. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither
6. thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6. Jesus
saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life:
7. no man cometh unto the Father but by me. 7. If ye had
known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from
8. henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8. Philip
saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth
9. us. 9. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time
with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he
that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest
10. thou *then*, Shew us the Father? 10. Believest thou not
that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words
that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the
11. Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11. Believe
me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me:
12. or else believe me for the very works' sake. 12. Verily,
verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works
that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these
13. shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13. And whatsoever
ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the
14. Father may be glorified in the Son. 14. If ye shall ask
15. any thing in my name, I will do *it*. 15. ¶ If ye love me,
16. keep my commandments: 16. And I will pray the Father,
and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide

17. with you for ever: 17. *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom
the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither
knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with
18. you, and shall be in you. 18. I will not leave you com-
19. fortless: I will come to you. 19. Yet a little while, and
the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I
20. live, ye shall live also. 20. At that day ye shall know that
21. I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21. He
that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is
that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of
my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself
22. to him. 22. Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord,
how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not
23. unto the world? 23. Jesus answered and said unto him,
If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father
will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our
24. abode with him. 24. He that loveth me not, keepeth not
my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but
25. the Father's which sent me. 25. These things have I
26. spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. 26. But
the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father
will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and
bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have
27. said unto you. 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I
give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.
28. 28. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and
come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice,
because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is
29. greater than I. 29. And now I have told you before it
come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might be-
30. lieve. 30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for
the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.
31. 31. But that the world may know that I love the Father;
and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.
Arise, let us go hence.

In treating the gospel as a drama, we have not supposed the presence of Pharisees in the preceding chapters, where we have seen them so prominent. They were dramatically introduced in order to illustrate their ignorance of the Law. The teacher now dramatically passes more immediately into the presence of the initiates of the Essene Society; but the teaching nevertheless continues to be symbolical, and the history mythical, because the writer of the gospel was under oath not to expose the secret doctrine by means of writings, or through any channel whatever.

Verse 1. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in GOD, believe also in me.

GOD is the Supreme Being, belief in whom is assumed. There is no formal proof of the existence of GOD anywhere offered in Scripture; because the being or existence of GOD is not an object of proof. To believe also in "me," means to believe in the Law, as an expression of GOD'S will, through the Spirit of Truth, this Spirit being the Father—the Father of the written Word; the Word being the Son of GOD, as having proceeded from the Spirit of Truth (for GOD is Truth); and the Son of man, as being a written record, as already explained. But as the Law and its Spirit are in harmony, these expressions are used interchangeably.

Verses 2 to 5, introduce the question of Thomas,—How can we know the way?

Verse 6. [The Law] saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

The Father is the Spirit in which the Law is written; and the written becomes the way to the Father, to its own Spirit, when the disciple becomes obedient to its requirements: for, by obedience, the soul is brought experimentally into the state of the writer, and then knows the Truth [and this is the Life also] by what is elsewhere called the witness of the Spirit.

Verse 7 carries on the teaching. If ye had known me [that is, if ye had understood the Letter], ye should have known my Father also [as just explained]; and from henceforth ye have known him and have seen him.

This is metaphorical language. All who see, that is, all who understand the Law, see or understand also the Father, the Spirit of the Law—if their eyes are not "holden," as in the case of the disciples going to Emmaus.

Verse 8. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Verse 9. Jesus [the Law] saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Here the Law is supposed to rebuke Philip for not having been understood, after having been so long among the Jews. The drama treats Philip as if he saw, indeed, the Letter of the Law, which reveals the Father (to those who have discerning eyes), but did not see the Spirit, the Father of the Law—this being the secret of the Essenes.

Verse 10. Believest thou not [addressing Philip] that I [the Law] am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I [the written Law] speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Verse 11. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

The two natures of Christ, of which so much is said in theology, are also the so much talked-of two witnesses; and these are the Father and Son as expressed in the Law, which is personified in Christ. The Father is the Spirit of the Law; and the Letter in which the Spirit expresses itself, is the Son; and each is in the other, or is said to be so, though we have already seen, that the Father is greater than the Son. The Spirit is likened to light, but the Letter to water; and these are respectively represented by Christ and by John the Baptist.

The appeal to works (verse 11), Believe me for the very works' sake—refers to the works of the Law in the soul; just as, in this age, many appeal to the effects of the Bible upon the hearts and lives of men as a proof of the divinity of the Bible.

Verse 12. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

If this passage is to be taken literally, we might ask where a believer has ever been seen; for who can do the works of Christ, literally understood; and who has ever been known to do greater works?

But this need not trouble us. The recorded works are not historical: they merely symbolize the spiritual works of the Law in the soul; and the passage imports that he who believes shall do, that is, shall see, himself, the works of JESUS, and even greater works than those recorded.

The works referred to, being spiritual, are indefinable and unlimited, and can only be exhibited by symbolism—as, by a representation of symbolical cures of leprosy [sin], of the blind [ignorance], and the like.

They must be seen at this day by the spiritual effects of the Bible in the souls of those who have faith in the Bible.

The Bible is not made less by this mode of interpretation; but, on the contrary, it needs to be "exalted" or "raised up," in the estimation of its advocates, in order to reach the Essene point of view.

Verse 13. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Verse 14. If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

To ask any thing in the name of CHRIST, means to ask in harmony with, or in obedience to, the Law; and in this case the Law fulfils its own promises.

Verse 15. If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Here again, as elsewhere, obedience is insisted upon as an essential requisite, before the promises of the Law can be appropriated.

It must be remarked, however, that obedience to the Law may take place without any knowledge of the written form of the Law, manifesting the existence and independence of the Spirit of Truth,—as St. Paul very plainly saw, referring to it in his Epistle to the Romans:

For when the Gentiles, which have not the [Mosaic] Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, else excusing, one another; in the day when GOD shall judge the secrets of men, by JESUS CHRIST [that is, by the Spirit], according to my gospel (Romans ii. 14–16).

This passage clearly recognizes the Law of the Spirit as independent of the written Law, by which the Gentiles are to be judged, not according to the gospel of JESUS CHRIST, but by JESUS CHRIST according to the gospel of St. Paul. We should recollect that the word gospel, as used in the New Testament, preceded the written New Testament.

St. Paul saw that the Gentiles might do by nature the things contained in the Law; meaning, of course, the essential duties, but not its mere ceremonies; and the same may be said now: for, some men are true, independently of external teaching; some reach the higher truth through and by means of the Letter; while some, finally, are true externally by a mere baptism of the Letter, who never are happy enough to pass over Jordan.

The first class are those who eat bread in the kingdom of GOD (Luke xiv. 15). The second we may suppose the Essene initiates, who receive the truth through the instrumentality of the Law. The third class may be considered disciples of the Baptist and remain in the baptism by water. To this class CHRIST refers in Matt. xi. 11, as followers of the Baptist: Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Here the Baptist is put for the written Law, and the meaning is, that among all the writings in the world, designed for the instruction and guidance of man, there are none so important as those of Moses; nevertheless, whoever lives in the Spirit of Truth, independently of external teaching, is more blessed than a literal follower of the Law, whose life even St. Paul called a life of bondage: and this is true, although the bondage is for the benefit of the uninitiated, who may not be able to worship GOD "in spirit and in truth." For it must be borne in mind, that whoever lives without observing the Law, either as it is written or as it is unwritten, is on a sure road to destruction—figured by hell; for this is only a generic word comprehending the miseries of a lawless, unregulated life.

The commandments being supposed kept, the Law proceeds to say:

Verse 16. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

Verse 17. Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

These verses are of the greatest importance, and should be well considered.

The commonly received opinion is, that CHRIST had [or has] two natures, a divine and a human nature, and that some of his sayings must be referred to his divine character, while others must be explained by referring them to his human nature. This has occasioned a vast amount of controversy in the Church, Trinitarians asserting his equality with GOD, explaining certain texts, adverse to their views, by the supposition of a human nature in CHRIST. Unitarians, on the other hand, place the principal stress upon those passages in which the inferiority to the Father is admitted or asserted, and attribute the passages implying or asserting the higher nature to figurative language, or as if said of a nature above that of man but inferior to GOD.

Trinitarians suppose two, some of them even three natures in CHRIST, and upon this supposition they easily explain the seeming contrariety of expressions referring to him; but their opponents admit but one nature in CHRIST which is neither GOD nor man, but a mysterious intermediate being through whom GOD communicated instruction to the world, or made known his will to man.

CHRIST is regarded as a Mediator in both systems, but the Trinitarians see his mediatorial character in the assumption of the human by the divine nature, whilst the Unitarians perceive this character in an inexplicable divinity of a nature above that of man, to give authority to his teachings, but inferior to the Father to preserve the doctrine of the indivisible and unparticipated unity of the divine nature.

The difficulties in these views are irreconcilable so long as the record is judged after the Letter.

The consequence is, that a large class of intelligent readers and thinkers has grown up all over Christendom, who repudiate the Scriptures altogether. These are denounced by both parties in the Church as infidels, and it has been usual to apply odious epithets to them. To escape from this, a sort of esoteric silence has been introduced by which great numbers live apparently in the Church but are not of it, occupying the precise position of the supposititious child described in the 7th Book of Plato's Republic.

They deny the divinity of the Scriptures, but without, for the most part, coming to any understanding as to the nature or object of those mysterious books, and thus lose all the benefit they might derive from them by assuming another stand-point.

Now, a state of mere negation is uncongenial to the positive nature of man; and where it is maintained for any length of time, it is not because the negative view is satisfactory, but it is owing to one of two things: either to constant occupation, by which the mind is dissipated or engrossed and withdrawn from the contemplation of the subject; or, to a delusive quiet, temporarily secured by an unconfessed despair of arriving at any satisfactory solution of the problem presented by the Bible,—which nevertheless is perpetually repeating the wonderful language, I and my Father are one; and, without me ye can do nothing: while, as often as the meaning of these words is sought in the Bible itself, the answer comes out of the book itself—I say the same now that I said to you from the beginning (John viii. 25), beyond which the Letter cannot go.

To the author, nothing is more clear than that this language is exactly explained, or the principle for its explanation is precisely set forth in the Phædrus of Plato. It is proper to say that the author saw and applied this principle to the explanation of the gospels without any thought of Plato's writings, wherein he subsequently found a complete confirmation of his views.

All writings are, in the doctrine of Plato, but water in comparison with the truth they are designed to express. The gospel writers so looked upon the Hebrew Law or Sacred writings; and they have symbolized those writings by water, the truth they express being symbolized by light, &c.

These two, as we have constant occasion to repeat, are respectively represented by John the Baptist, and by Christ; the Baptist being withdrawn soon after the introduction of Christ into the drama, who represents more particularly the Spirit of the teaching in the older records: but his teaching refers to both, the Letter and the Spirit, and these are the two characters of

Christ, the unity of which cannot be seen in the Letter (the flesh), where nevertheless the unity is "declared." Hence the controversies on this subject, so long as we persist in seeing the representation as a history, and refuse to accept it as a symbolical representation of doctrine.

When the Pharisees sent and questioned the Baptist, Who art thou; he is made to answer, I am not the Christ.

The simple meaning of this is,—when the Law is asked, Art thou the Truth? the answer is, I am not the Truth; but I am a witness of it, or I "declare" the Truth: there is one standing among you, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. Here, again, in this very language we have the Letter, the water, the flesh; but not the Spirit, the wine, the blood: neither is the wine anywhere made known, except in symbolism throughout the New Testament; but, even when Christ is before Pilate he is made to answer his questions in the very language of the Baptist: To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear *witness* unto the truth. No one in the form of man, human or divine, ever made an answer like this, under the circumstances as described; but a man was set forward in a sacred drama to utter it, speaking in the character of the Law.

The declaration, or answer, comes to us in a writing; and he who wrote it, was John the Evangelist, writing in the name of the Law which he personified in Christ. And who was John the Evangelist? He was one of a secret society among the Jews, who saw the symbolical character of the Law, and studied its spirit in the Spirit of Truth. In this Spirit the members of that society discovered the true meaning of the Law, and for their own edification and for the instruction of the younger members of the society, the elder and more experienced among them wrote mystical books for the interpretation of the Law, on the simple principle of personifying it. They had many books among them designed for the same purpose; and the gospels in the New Testament are four of those mystical interpretations, in which CHRIST is not a person, but a personification; and he represents the Hebrew sacred books; but more particularly the Law in its Letter and Spirit, which are the two *persons* in CHRIST.

In the passages just recited (John xiv. 16, 17), the Son, as the Letter, personified, is represented as praying the Father, the Spirit of the Letter, and as promising the disciples *another* Comforter—for the Letter must be left behind; and this Comforter is then called the Spirit of Truth. This, because it is invisible [the invisible side of the visible Letter], the world [in general] "cannot receive;" but, addressing the followers of truth, "Ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

This Comforter is the Spirit [of Truth] which, where two or three are gathered together in his [or its name], is said to be in their *midst* (Matt. xviii. 20). This Spirit is CHRIST; for we now read:

Verse 18. I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*

Verse 19. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

At first, the Baptist [the Letter] is in the ascendant. There is none greater than he of woman born (Matt. xi. 11). But when the Spirit comes, the Letter may be said to recede from the vision: it is seen to be a mere veil, a shadow; in itself dead. The Letter cannot accompany the soul in death, and can scarcely be said to be present even in affliction. But the Spirit is life, and abides ever "in the house" [that is, in the soul], and is said to raise up those who possess it in the "last day," meaning the day of death; for the Spirit is immortal, and, addressing GOD, uses the language, Thou wilt not let thy Holy One see corruption.

Verse 20. At that day [the last day] ye shall know that I [the Letter] am [in Spirit] in the Father [the Spirit of Truth], and ye [the faithful disciples of Truth] in me [the Son, as the Spirit], and I [as the Spirit] in you.

Here is a mystical process, beautifully exhibited for the instruction of the members of a secret society, who were taught not only to regard the Law as divine, but to consider its inner sense as too holy and sacred to be openly talked of in public places: the children's bread was not to be given to the dogs.

Even St. Paul warns the Philippians (iii. 2) to beware of dogs, who are called, in Rev. xxii. 15, *the with-*

out—the very class referred to in the latter portion of Mark iv. 11. Unto you [the initiated or *within*] it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of GOD: but unto them that are *without*, all these things are done in parables. The Colossians are also cautioned by St. Paul (ch. iv. 5), to Walk in wisdom [that is, prudently], toward them that are *without:* and they were told to let their speech be always with grace, seasoned with *salt*, that is, with truth.

St. Paul, although a converted Pharisee, was probably initiated into the secrets of the Essenes after his conversion, and adopted some portion of their mystical language, as we may see by the passage referring to the *flesh*, in Philippians iii., meaning the Letter and the ceremonial Law of the Jews.

The Essenes were taught to regard the Law as divine; and through this conception, and a love of the Law, or of the Truth seen in the Law, a certain obedience was secured, which generated or brought into living action in the follower, the Spirit in which the Law itself was conceived and written.

This Spirit sees itself *in* the Law, and then *through* the Law, in the author of the Law: and finally the written Law, as a mere writing, loses its authority, and is said to *vanish*, as in Luke xxiv. 31, and the Soul, conscious of the presence of the Spirit of Truth in itself, finds itself in the presence of the Father, experience becoming vision.

The veil is taken away (2 Cor. iii. 16), and a sense of the invisible presence becomes life. "Ye see me:

because I live, ye shall live also. At that day [or when this takes place] ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

This passage points to the conviction of the Truth, as in the Law, which results from an experience acquired by an obedience to the Law: and this is the *other* comforter, which is to abide forever in the house; that is, in the soul.

Let us attempt to put into words a plain statement of the position of the Essene Jew towards the Law.

He stands a unit in the midst of universal nature, with God, at first, infinitely remote from him, his soul yearning to know the mystery of life, or laboring with the awful question, "Tell me thy name."

We must take him, not as a child when "God and intimations of immortality may be all around him;" but as a man entering the mystic society. For man, though it may give "little pleasure to know it, is [often] further off from Heaven than when he was a boy."

The Law comes to him in the name of the Most High. It comes as a revelation of God's will. There is a vague belief in God, who is invisible and unknown; but the Law comes to make him known.

The Law itself proclaims that this knowledge arises upon condition of obedience to the Law, with promises and threatenings—blessings following the obedient; evils attending the disobedient. Turn to me, and I will turn to you, saith the Lord of Hosts.

The experience of life now begins to be distinctly observed, and both its good and its evil are found to be bound up in the Law, seeming to have proceeded from it and thus become witnesses to the Truth of the Law, giving the highest proof, that of experience, that the Law reveals the Truth.

The Jew now begins to know GOD, who is recognized as the author of good and of evil, and the Law seems, as it were, to take life. Its Word is regarded as the Word of GOD, endowed with a mysterious power—the power to reward the obedient, and to punish the disobedient.

The Law is now, by a simple metonym, called the LORD, who is mystically seen in both the Letter and the Spirit as one, the Spirit being the Holy One of Israel, standing invisibly in the *midst* of the Law, under various symbols—the Lamb, the Dove, and even the Ass, the symbol of humility, the Lamb and the Dove representing innocence and truth; all of these being emblematic of the *disposition* which should characterize one who seeks a community of Spirit with the Holy One of Israel, who is, in an exceedingly mystical sense, this very *disposition:* for, what doth the LORD [the Law] require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy GOD?

At length, to the more reflective and contemplative, the Spirit takes precedence over the written Law, and is seen to have preceded it, and to follow it, being eternal.

This state is not attained at once, but through a transition period during which the Law occupies an indeterminate position, in which a sense of its importance rises and falls, comes and goes; but finally the Law "departs," the soul rising itself to the full realization of the truth: and now God, the infinitely and fearfully remote, becomes infinitely and awfully present; even at-one with the believer; and this is life eternal—a knowledge of the only true God and of the Law which was sent to "declare" him or make him known.

This is the state of the initiated Essene. It is the condition sought to be produced by the mystical teacher of the "brethren," for whose instruction and edification the gospels were written, in which the law is personified in Jesus Christ, the mysterious Son of the equally mysterious virgin-mother—as represented by Matthew and Luke, though neither Mark nor John give any particulars of the supernatural birth.

The author does not wish to be understood as saying that a right conception of this subject is easily acquired; on the contrary, he is sure that the question involved in it presents the most profound and difficult problem in nature—until, at least, the solution is partially entered upon, and then the difficulties begin to yield, the very nature of the difficulties themselves being scarcely understood until they begin to be solved.

The true nature of the question, we repeat, cannot be understood until the student enters upon the solution, and then he begins to conceive a solution possible. The Pearl is at least then believed in, and a hope of its possession invites the student onward, who faintly perceives the truth of the saying (John vi. 44), No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, *draw* him: which means, that no one goeth to the Law successfully except in a spirit congenial with that in which the Law was written; but, with the Spirit, the door is opened through which one may go in and out and find pasture (John x. 9).

So long as any one insists upon an outward actuality to these representations, the inward truth symbolized in the history cannot become clear; but let us see personifications instead of persons, and the obscurity will gradually clear up: a beautiful truth will then take the place of a cloudy mystery. There are those who urge that the Scriptures were intended for the simple and the uninstructed; and therefore, as they infer, they cannot be so mystical and so difficult to understand as many suppose. This is an error. St. Paul tells us, and tells us truly, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient (1 Tim. i. 9). The simple and true, the right-minded and just man has no need of the Law to tell him how to live—how to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. But when the principle of rectitude has been laid aside, man enters the wilderness, and then the Law comes to his aid. But it is necessarily a subordinate mode of teaching, and teaches under almost insuperable disadvantages—its office being to raise the dead, the morally dead, to a rational life.

Having just referred to the passage from John vi. 44, No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him,—let us place by the side of it the declaration (chapter xiv. 6), No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. The Law, we have said, is the *door*, through which the Jew, by obedience, passed to the Father, who nevertheless "draws" those who go to the Son, by the Spirit of Truth, which, again, is the Father of the Law.

We feel at liberty to illustrate this mystical process by a simple and common experience—that, by which a poem is appreciated. Every genuine poem encloses a living truth; not a mere fact for the senses, nor merely a cold principle addressed to the intellect, but something addressed to the inner and higher nature of man.

Such a poem may be said to be double, and may be assimilated to the double character of the gospel or of the Law. To see it merely in the Letter, may indeed excite curious imagery in the minds of many readers, to whom the Letter is all-important for the preservation of the imagery.

But in genuine poems there is something deeper for the poetic spirit, and when this is apprehended in its life-power, it is seen to be independent of the form in which the Letter presents it. When thus seen, the Letter may be said to "vanish,"—the truth being possessed in a higher degree, and seen, not as depending upon the Letter, but as life itself.

We will now return to the text.

Verse 21. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them [that is, He that hath the Law and keepeth its "precepts"], he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

This *manifestation* of CHRIST, is the life-consciousness of the presence of the Spirit in which the Law is written. Applied to the present day, the same truth may be seen by substituting the Bible for the Law as understood by the Essenes.

Verse 22. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, LORD, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

The distinction between the world and those addressed by JESUS, is that between the Pharisees, who judged after the flesh [the Letter], and the Essenes, who judged according to the Spirit or internal sense of the Letter.

But the answer of JESUS must not disclose the secret of the Essenes, and therefore it is still wrapt in mystery, being in fact a mere repetition of what he had just said.

Verse 23. JESUS [the Law] answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words [the words of the Law]: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

The use of the plural here does not alter the sense, for the two are in unison or harmony: I and my Father are one [in Spirit].

Verse 24. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear [or read in the Law] is not mine, but the Father's, which sent me.

Verse 25. These things have I spoken to you, being yet present with you.

The mystical sense of the Law being said to be present and absent, going and coming, lies in its double character of Letter and Spirit. The Letter is present when the Spirit of it is not recognized; but when the Spirit is known, it is known or seen, as it were, through the Letter, which may then be said to vanish, as in Luke.

The Letter, as such, does not abide perpetually, because man himself, as a phenomenal being, is transitory: but the Spirit abides "forever;" and the Letter is said to come and go in relation to the Spirit, being instrumental only in the work of the Spirit.

The Letter comes as a testimony to the Spirit it invisibly embodies. It is John, the Messenger (Matt. xi. 10), preparing the way for the Spirit: but the Spirit is the kingdom of heaven, referred to in the next verse, the 11th. Or, we may consider the Letter as John the Baptist, described in the gospel of John (chapter i. 15), who bears witness of one that cometh after him, but is preferred before him, "because he was before him."

The Letter is important before the Spirit of the Letter is known, as a testimony to make it known; but when the Spirit of the Letter becomes known, the importance of the Letter recedes, or "decreases" (John iii. 30), and this transition of the Letter is called its presence or its absence, according to the absence or presence of the Spirit.

This must explain the language in respect to the coming and going of JESUS, although mere words cannot precisely exhibit a double process which is simultaneous; for the vanishing of JESUS, as the Letter, and the coming of CHRIST, as the Spirit, is but one operation.

It may be proper to say, speaking in *time*, that the Spirit comes first and the Letter then vanishes, as in Luke xxiv. 31; or, that the Letter departs and the Spirit comes afterwards, as expressed in John xvi. 7.

The presence and the absence of JESUS take the form, in this age, of the historical and the doctrinal in Christianity. Before the doctrine is clearly distinguished, the historical is prominent, and seems indispensable to the truth; but when the internal sense is recognized, the importance of the historical declines, and is finally seen to be mythical. It is no longer recognized as history, and, as such, may be said to vanish.

This process has its absolute verity in a still more profound truth.

To what is called the natural man in a subordinate sense, external nature is the positive, the visible, the tangible, the real: but, in process of time, a sense of the supernatural rises in the soul; and the visible then becomes unreal and shadowy, even to the point of regarding death itself as a lifting of the veil which obscures or clouds the vision of GOD; and then, indeed, immortality is brought to light.

Verse 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy

Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.

It is important to observe here the various expressions used for one thing in different parts of the gospel, and the varied language used to describe its coming or being sent.

In verse 16 (chapter xiv.), we read that the Father will *give* the Comforter, described as "another," the Letter being one.

In verse 17, the Comforter is called the Spirit of Truth.

In verse 18, we see that the Comforter is CHRIST himself;—"I will come to you."

In verse 19, it is referred to as life.

In verse 20, its oneness with the Father is set forth, who (in verse 16) is to "give" the Comforter.

In verse 21, the manifestation of CHRIST is promised, who is again (in verse 23) referred to with the Father.

In verse 26, just recited, the Comforter is the Holy Ghost; which, therefore, is the Spirit of Truth, and Life, and CHRIST, and the Father, as referred to in the previous verses.

We must see, in all this, a certain unity in multiplicity which language fails to describe "adequately," naturally becoming mystical therefore in the attempt to describe it.

The Spirit, which is here called the Comforter, and by various other names, is called WISDOM in many places in the older writings. This was what Solomon asked for; and received, because he asked for it: as we read also in the New Testament, Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you, &c.

In Ecclesiasticus (ch. i. 26) we read, If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and *the Lord shall give* HER *unto thee.* The passage in John (ch. xiv. 21) has precisely the same meaning: He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and *will manifest myself to him.*

The "gift of wisdom" by the LORD, to those who "keep the commandments," as expressed in Ecclesiasticus, is the *manifestation of Christ*, as expressed in John xiv. 21; the condition being the same, to wit, the keeping of the commandments.

In the same sense we read, The Word of GOD most high is the fountain of Wisdom; and her ways are everlasting commandments (Ecclus. i. 5). But we must distinguish carefully between the divine Wisdom here understood, and that worldly knowledge, called the "wisdom of the wise," which is said to be foolishness before GOD; for the kingdom of heaven cannot be "taken" by the "violence" of man.

In the 6th chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon, we find passages requiring the same interpretation as those in the gospel, to wit:

Verse 11. Wherefore set your affections upon my words; desire them, and ye shall be instructed.

These words, to be desired, are the Words of the Law: here speaking in the character of Wisdom, as the Spirit of the commandments, that is, the Law of Moses, called the treasures of wisdom—the Spirit of which continues.

Verse 12. Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away: yea, she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her.

That is, in the language of John, she is *manifested* to those who love Christ, the representative of the Law.

This manifestation of Christ is not that of a person, but a certain conception or reception of an invisible Spirit of Truth, in which the soul realizes its own felicity as identified with the Nature of God, and not as an individual possession or property of itself. To see this Spirit of Truth is a spiritual operation within the soul, beautifully represented in the story of the two disciples going to Emmaus (vide Sec. XIII., Part First of this work). To return now to John, chapter xiv.

Verse 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The peace here spoken of is, of course, the peace of the Spirit in repose upon what is metaphorically called the bosom of God, figured by Abraham's bosom. It is pointed at by some greatly gifted profane writers as an indescribable stillness, a wonderful silence; upon which, it has been said, it is not good to dwell too much; and yet the soul that has never experienced it, may miss an important aid in the study of Scriptures, where the Sabbath itself is a symbol of it.

Verse 28. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. [The Letter goes and the Spirit comes as the Comforter.] If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

The Father is the Spirit, and is greater than the Letter, in precisely the sense of the 1st chapter, where John the Baptist speaks, in the name of the Letter, of one that comes after him, so much greater than he, that he is not worthy to unloose his shoe's latchet. The meaning here is precisely the same, for in this teaching the Word, the Light, the Father, the Comforter, and the Spirit of Truth are all one. These, in the flesh, are the Letter. The Letter disappears, or rather dissolves, as it were, before the Spirit, which seems to arise from it, as if brought by it. But the Spirit of Truth, the Father of the Letter, is greater than the Letter.

When the student conceives this aright, he will not ask for external evidence of what is called the truth of the Scriptures. He will, on the contrary, shrink from all the controversy that ever busied itself about what will be understood as the flesh. The true spirit, the Spirit of Truth, is not a child of controversy.

With the witness of the Spirit, the student will not have his critical temper roused because Matthew delivers much of his teaching as from a mountain (ch.

v. 1), seeing in this an allusion to a spiritual mountain; while Luke delivers a portion of this same teaching from CHRIST, as he "stood in the plain" (Luke vi. 17); Mark preferring to seat JESUS in a ship during much of his teaching; while John makes no use of the mountain, the plain, or the ship, in the manner of the other three gospel writers.

It is true that all three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, seat JESUS in a ship during a portion of his teaching, the two first including the parable of the Sower as a part of it; but Luke delivers this parable under other circumstances, and in other respects the teaching in Luke differs from that of Matthew and Mark; not as to doctrine, indeed, but as to the order of it. Luke gives a considerable portion of the sermon (on the mount, in Matthew), as if delivered in a *plain*. Neither Mark nor John have recorded the sermon except in scattered fragments, in passages here and there. But this is of no importance, unless we insist upon looking at the gospels from a literal point of view.

Verse 29. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it come to pass ye might believe.

This language was used before the gospels were written, or was used *when* the gospel of John was written, and does not refer to the gospel itself, but to the Law. The teacher has simply indicated a peculiar experience, the verity of which the initiates were to know when it *came;* and they were thus told in order that, when it *came*, they might believe in the Law as divine;—just as if a modern teacher of the Bible should tell a pupil to take the Bible for his guide in life, and that in due time he should discover in himself certain results; and then add, that he tells him in advance, in order that when the experience comes he may know that the Bible is divine.

Verse 30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

Verse 31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

This may be considered as the close of an Essene lecture.

The initiates have apparently been brought nearly to the point of belief. When the Spirit is really received, the necessity for consulting the written Law is diminished. This may be indicated by the words, Hereafter I will not talk much with you. For when the true teaching is received, the soul is free, "walks with GOD," and is prepared to leave the written Word "behind," in the language of St. Paul.

The latter part of verse 30, alluding to the prince of this world as having no part in the Spirit of Truth, is an anticipation of the "judgment" which a spirit of righteousness, the Comforter, passes upon its temptations and delusions, as we shall see in chapter xvi. The "prince of this world" is nature regarded phenomenally, and not recognized in its spirit as divine. Nature in this low sense is characterized, in the Revelation, as the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;

and this is not the less true, because the passage in the Revelation may have another application. This very same nature, in another sense, is a perpetual virgin. If it were not so, no ancient writing whatever could be read with intelligence in modern times.

JOHN, CHAPTER XV.

John, Ch. XV. 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
2. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he
taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth
3. it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3. Now ye are
4. clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4.
Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit
of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except
5. ye abide in me. 5. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches:
he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth
6. much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6. If a man
abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;
and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they
7. are burned. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in
you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
8. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so
9. shall ye be my disciples. 9. As the Father hath loved me,
10. so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10. If ye
keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even
as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his
11. love. 11. These things have I spoken unto you, that my
joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.
12. 12. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as
13. I have loved you. 13. Greater love hath no man than this,
14. that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14. Ye are my
15. friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15. Henceforth
I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not
what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all
things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known
16. unto you. 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen
you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth
fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye

17. shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. 17.
18. These things I command you, that ye love one another. 18. If
the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated*
19. you. 19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his
own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen
20. you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20.
Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not
greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will
also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will
21. keep yours also. 21. But all these things will they do unto
you for my name's sake, because they know not him that
22. sent me. 22. If I had not come and spoken unto them,
they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their
23, 24. sin. 23. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. 24.
If I had not done among them the works which none other
man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both
25. seen, and hated both me and my Father. 25. But *this cometh*
to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in
26. their law, They hated me without a cause. 26. But when
the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the
Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the
27. Father, he shall testify of me. 27. And ye also shall bear
witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

Verse 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Here the Law is the vine, and its Spirit is the husbandman. This was, in the Essene point of view, the sole root and support of a true life. No one could come to the Father but by clinging to the vine. The vine is Christ, and Christ is the Law.

Every branch in me (verse 2) that beareth not fruit, the Father taketh away [that is, every thing not *rooted* in the Law, as the truth, must perish]: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, the Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

This purging of the branches is an allusion to the trials of life, which were regarded as trials of virtue, necessary to its perfection, as expressed metaphorically in the words, "For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity."

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, even refers to JESUS as having been made "perfect through suffering."

Verse 3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you.

This does not refer to the words recorded as having been spoken by CHRIST, but to the words spoken by CHRIST as the Word or Spirit of the Law. We see, at this point, the progress of the initiates, who are supposed to have received the Law as divine, and by a life in accordance with its commandments [or words] have become "clean," that is, purified—an indispensable requisite to the attainment of the life which the Law is supposed to give its followers.

The soul of man is treated as if it contained the pearl of great price; but in its intercourse with the great mother of abominations it becomes obscured or overlaid with corruptions, which need to be washed away. The Law prescribes the rules of life which, if observed, are said to make its followers "clean." Yet this purifying of the soul is a mystical process in which the Law, as a writing, is but instrumental and can "do nothing of itself." It needs to be seconded or forwarded by the action of the pearl itself from within, in order to be genuine.

The allusion is to this in Rev. iii. 20, Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me. This is only another form of repeating what we have just seen in John xiv. 21. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,—or, in other words, will sup with him.

The Father of the Law and the pearl, are of one and the same nature, and hence the power of the Law is not in the Law itself, as a writing, but in the Spirit of the Law, its Father, which is of one and the same nature with the pearl, as we have just said; and when the Law is said to have made its followers "clean," it must not be understood as the work of the Law itself, but of the Father, that is, of the pearl itself, which, to use a modern phrase, becoming self-conscious, sees itself in the Law, and through the Law in the Father.

It is only here that the language is made good by which the Law says,—I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in One [Spirit].

This Spirit is called Love, and we must not hesitate to say, in a Platonic sense, as the love of truth, as both a cause and an effect.

As seen in the Law, the Father and the pearl are related as cause and effect, and yet are but one. But this must explain itself, for it is not seen in a writing but in meditation.

The washing process in alchemy is the purifying process of the Law, and is treated mystically because, unless the pearl acts of itself, the "gold" is said not to be genuine. It is said, in such a case, to have a "surface tincture," and will not stand the "test of fire," that is, of trial.

We are not treating of alchemy, but will just remark, in passing, that alchemic books, setting aside imitations, are essentially religious; and whatever else they say, they set forth the necessity of purifying what the writers call the matter of the philosopher's stone.

We have said elsewhere that Bishop Berkeley's Essay on Tar water, is a hermetic treatise on the Spirit of the Universe. The Tar, of which the Bishop writes, is man himself; who is to be washed, and washed, and washed, until its *water* [or Spirit] becomes, in the language of John, "clean."

Verse 4. Abide in me [the Law], and I [the Spirit of the Law] in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me.

This is a beautiful and striking simile.

The Law is the vine, which gives life to its followers; but only to those who abide in it. Those who "depart" from the Law, lose its blessings, like branches which, separated from the parent vine, can receive no nourishment from it.

Verse 5. I [the Law] am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

The modern lover of the Bible has only to personify the sacred volume, and by attributing this language to it, as if endowed with speech, he may see how the Essene mystic taught the initiates of the Essene society the mysteries and the powers of the Law.

Verse 6. If a man abide not in me [if he abide not in the Law, or, as the modern might say, in the sacred volume], he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

We must regard the Law as the recognized rule of life to the Jew; and to live according to the Law, was to live a right or righteous life. Whoever departed from the Law, fell under the dominion of blind impulses to which he became a victim.

Such was the belief; and, even in modern times, it is almost a miracle when destruction does not follow such a condition.

The dangers of this state or condition result from this: that the written Law is an expression of the divine truth, which preceded the writing, which accompanies it [or does not leave it "alone," in the language of John], and which survives or comes "after" it. Now, the written Law contains useful directions for conduct in life, and when set at naught, the evils are encountered from which the Law, as one of its objects, was designed as a protection.

When the Law is blindly followed, a certain benefit may be said to be as blindly received, which, then, becomes the evidence that the Law is founded in truth. When the Law is disregarded, the evil is met with, which the Law was designed to prevent; and the Law is thus in either case established as the expression of the truth. To follow the Law blindly was, and is, a baptism with water; but to see the reason or the Spirit of the Law, was, and is, the higher state; and this is the baptism with fire. To be in doubt between the two, and to see first one and then the other and not be able to decide between them, is the precise condition of the Lunatic, described in Matt. xvii. 15, who "ofttimes falleth into the fire and oft into the water." This vacillation is *cured* by the Spirit of Truth.

To fall away from the written Law, without coming under the guidance of the Spirit, was regarded as sure destruction; because the nature of GOD is immutable, and, like the falling of rain, has no respect to persons. To depart from the Law, and "not do by nature the things contained in the Law," as St. Paul expresses it, was, and is, sure destruction.

Both the Pharisee and the Essene referred this destruction to the Law; but the former to its Letter, the latter to its Spirit. The ignorant Jew saw the evil, not as proceeding from eternal laws, expressing the eternal and immutable nature of GOD, but as proceeding from the Law of Moses as a mysterious power; whereas the Essene recognized the power as the manifestation of the Spirit of the Law, living in the Law, and called the Father.

We should not measure ancient opinions by modern science; but must seek to understand those opinions upon their own grounds. The Jews saw the Law as the Word of God, as if he spake audibly in it; and the pious among them saw no line of separation between the Law and its Father, but *each was in the other;* and the object of the Essene teacher was so to bring the Law into the living consciousness of the initiate, that he might be *at-one* with the Law, and thence one with the Father, the Spirit of the Law,—"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be one, even as we are one," as we shall see this expressed at the conclusion of this teaching.

Let us here again revert to the importance of the Law, as seen by the Jew, even at the hazard of repetition; for we must understand this in order to realize the teaching in the gospel, the design of which was to bring the mind of the pupil into unity or unison with God through a recognition of the Law as divine, the experimental proof of which was to be provided by a compliance with the Law, which, in its spirit, is one with the virgin mother.

The importance of the Law is set forth in every part of Scripture; very much as the importance of the Bible is now believed in by many Christians, who perceive in it an expression of the will of God.

We will illustrate this by a few passages, some of which have already been recited in the Second Section of this Part. They will bear repetition because of their immediate application to the chapter under consideration.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: But his delight is in *the Law of the Lord;* and in his LAW doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water [that is, he shall be like a branch of the vine, as we have just seen it expressed], that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper [that is, verse 7 of the chapter before us, If ye abide in me (the vine, the Law), and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will (consistently with the Law, must be understood), and it shall be done unto you]: But the ungodly [as the Psalmist proceeds to say—those who do not abide in the vine, as we read in the gospel] are not so: they are like the chaff which the wind driveth away (Psalm i. 1–4). [That is, the ungodly—those who do not abide in the vine, the Law—are cast forth and withered; and they are gathered and burned in the fire.]

The instruction in the 1st Psalm and that in the 15th chapter of John, is precisely the same, and is even expressed with but a slight variation in language; only John has poetically personified the Law as if it spoke forth its own powers and grace.

We have already pointed to the 2d Psalm, where we read (verse 7)—I will declare the decree [another of the many names of the Law]: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Here the Law is the Son; and the LORD is the Spirit, or Father of it; and then we read (verse 11), Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. And, immediately following, are the words:

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are they that put their trust in him.

To kiss the Son has no other meaning in this passage than that contained in the injunction, to "abide in the vine," as expressed by John; for the vine is CHRIST, and CHRIST is the Law. As the Spirit of the Law, CHRIST is the LORD of the Psalmist, the teaching in the two portions of Scripture being the same.

Where the language is used in the gospels, Thou art my beloved Son, &c.—this is said of the Law no less than in the Psalms, with this only difference, that the Son is more particularly indicated in the gospel of John, as the Spirit of the Law, the Law itself being personified in the Baptist and made to *suggest* the *spiritual* Son under certain characteristics—that of the Lamb and of the Dove.

In both portions of Scripture it is the Law that is characterized as the Son of GOD, though the writers of the New Testament wrote the gospels to illustrate the Spirit of the Law, the Letter and Spirit being related to each other as are the Baptist and CHRIST, the first witnessing the second, while the second is invisibly in the first. But the second *was* before the first, and as such the second becomes and is the LORD of the Psalmist,—as, where he says, Blessed are they whose GOD is the LORD,—the LORD being the Spirit of the Law.

Hence we read—The words of the LORD [meaning the words of the Law] are pure words: as silver tried in the furnace of earth, purified seven times (Ps. xii. 6).

In the gospel, the Law is personified, and brought forward to teach in its name; yet not openly, for it is Essene (or Masonic) teaching, and is mystical because the members of the society were sworn not to write of their secret otherwise than in allegory and symbolism.

The gospel is a divine drama, mysteriously illustrating the reception of the Law as divine by the initiates of the Essene society. The problem is, to see the Spirit of the Law, as the eternal Word: and this is to see CHRIST as the disciples going to Emmaus saw him.

The importance of the Law is recognized in numberless passages of the Apocrypha, which may very well be appealed to in support of this point; thus:

The parables of knowledge are in the treasures of Wisdom: but godliness is an abomination to a sinner. If thou desire Wisdom, *keep the commandments* [that is, keep the Law, the treasures of Wisdom], and the Lord [the Father of the Law] shall give her unto thee.

That is, keep the commandments, and the Lord will send the Comforter, as promised in the gospel in precisely a like sense.

For the fear of the Lord [the Law] is wisdom and instruction: and faith and meekness are his delight (Ecclus. i. 25–27).

All this, expressed in the first person, would precisely answer to the language of Christ: "I will manifest myself to him;" that is, to him who keepeth the commandments. The Father or the Lord *giving* wisdom to one who has kept the commandments, is Christ *manifesting* himself under the same conditions: and this, in the Revelation, is called supping with one who opens the door when Wisdom knocks.

There are two kinds of fear: the fear of doing wrong; and, a fear of the penalties of wrong-doing. The first is, of course, the only fear which "worketh righteousness," and opens or becomes the "door" to the knowledge of God.

In the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, the Spirit or Wisdom of the Law is personified; and many expressions, found in this chapter, are repeated in John with but a very slight variation. We have already referred to this chapter, but will recite a few verses again, because so immediately applicable for illustrating the point under examination; thus:

Verse 9. He created me from the beginning of the world, and I shall never fail.

This is said of the spiritual Father of the Law, called by John, the Word.

Verses 18 to 23, are touchingly beautiful and impressive: it is Wisdom speaking.

I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge, and holy hope: I therefore, being eternal [the Word of John], am given to all my children which *are named of him.*

In John it is CHRIST, the same Wisdom, that speaks in the name of the Law, saying (chapter xvii. 6), I have manifested thy name unto the men *thou gavest me* out of the world.

In the language from Ecclesiasticus—children which *are named of him*—the Father is referred to, as in John viii. 26, I speak to the world those things which I have heard of *him*:—upon which the Pharisees are made to say (verse 27)—They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

In John, it is the Law personified, that speaks the words dictated in the Law by the Spirit of Truth, the Father: and this is the Wisdom speaking in Ecclesiasticus.

The passage from Ecclesiasticus proceeds thus:

19. Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits.

In Matthew xi. 28, we read—Come unto me [CHRIST, the Wisdom of the Law] all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

In Isaiah, the same call is expressed in these words, —Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters [that is, come to the sacred Scriptures, the treasures of Wisdom, symbolized by *waters*], and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk [Spirit and Letter], without money and without price.

Here is but one teaching in all this, although found in different portions of Scripture.

The passage continues:

20. For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honey-comb. 21. They that eat me shall yet be hungry [for more wisdom], and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty [for more spiritual wine]. Here we have the *flesh* and *blood* of the Son of man (John vi. 53).

The hunger and thirst are those of joy, still satisfying themselves, feasting upon heavenly manna, of which there is no satiety.

The passage still proceeds:

22. He that obeyeth me shall never be confounded, and they that work by me shall not do amiss.

And then we find the whole of this expressly referred to the divine Law in these words:

23. All these things are the book of the covenant of the most high God, even the LAW which Moses commanded for an heritage unto the congregations of Jacob.

We can hardly read a page of these sacred books without finding ourselves carried to the Law of Moses, as the basis of all Hebrew teaching.

The Law shall be found perfect without lies: and wisdom is perfection to the faithful mouth (Ecclus. xxxiv. 8).

Again: He that keepeth the Law bringeth offerings enough (Ecclus. xxxv. 1).

Again: He that giveth his mind to the Law of the Most High, and is occupied in the meditation thereof, will seek out the wisdom [the spirit, the internal truth] of all the ancient, and be occupied in prophecies [that is, in their study]. He will keep the sayings of the renowned men: and, where subtle parables are, he will be there also [engaged in their study; for ancient wisdom was expressed in parables and "dark sayings" (Prov. i. 6)]: He will seek out the secrets of grave sentences, and be conversant in dark parables (Ecclus. xxxix. 1–3).

Again: The knowledge of the commandments of the Lord is the doctrine of life: and they that do things that please him shall receive the fruit of immortality. The fear of the Lord is all wisdom; and in all wisdom is the performance of the Law, and the knowledge of his omnipotence (Ecclus. xix. 19, 20).

We may remember here the conclusion of the Preacher: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.

Without appreciating the Law as it stood in the mind of the Jew, it will be impossible to understand the later writings, founded upon the Law. It was the rule of life, and the way to "life everlasting." It was recognized as so immediately divine, that its declarations or commandments were regarded as the very Word of GOD. The LAW, and the Law of the LORD, were equivalent expressions; and the Jew passed readily to the substitution of the Spirit under the name of the LORD for that of the Law. Hence, what a Jew saw in the Law, or read in the Law through the Spirit, he personified as speaking to him, from which the expression came into use: The LORD said unto me; or, Thus saith the LORD; or, again, the Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon me—not that there was a vocal sound in the case, but there was a poetic personification of what the Law was supposed to teach.

But the mystical method of teaching in the Law was continued by the subsequent writers, and the whole Bible, as we now have it, needs interpretation from some other than a literal stand-point; we say the whole, for the exceptions are so few that they are hardly worth naming.

The striking character of the above passages from the older writings may show us that it is but a step, from the method of teaching in the Old to that of the New Testament; and that in the gospels we meet with the same acknowledgment of the supreme importance of the Law, which is simply personified in JESUS CHRIST. Let us now return to John.

In verses 8 to 14 (ch. xv.) there are dramatic allusions, looking forward to the catastrophe which lies fully conceived in the design of the writer. The Spirit of grace and truth, having been brought into a temporal scene supernaturally, or in a supernatural character, must be removed from it in some other than an ordinary manner; and we shall see that the priests and Pharisees, with whom, in the first part of the drama, he has been brought into contact and controversy, are made the instruments of the tragedy.

The Pharisees everywhere crucify the spirit of religion.

Verse 15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known to you.

That is: All things that are written in the Law, the Law makes known; and, the disciples being now supposed acquainted with the Law, it is no longer to be regarded as a master [a schoolmaster, as St. Paul calls it, Gal. iii. 24, 25], but as a friend. The Law having accomplished its purpose, by communicating to its followers its spirit, is no longer a master, but a friend.

In verse 20, the Law, which has just been called a master and a friend, is called a servant: Remember the word that I said unto you (chapter xiii. 16), The servant is not greater than his lord.

This is said of the Law, which, in respect to the novitiate, is a master; but in respect to the truth it teaches, it is a servant; and the initiates are now supposed to be so far advanced as to be called "friends," and are warned to remember that the written Law is not above its Spirit.

This is expressed in Luke vi. 40, in the words: The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect, shall be as his master—the *perfect* being the fully instructed Essene.

The allusions to persecution are easily understood, intimating only that the Priests, who love their "places," as expressed in chapter xi. 48, must naturally be expected to be opposed to the children of light, whose master is represented as driving out of the temple its mercenary spirit.

Here, as in many other places, John is in harmony with the doctrine of Plato as represented in the life of Socrates, who would not teach for money, and came into conflict with Grecian Pharisees, if this is not an anachronism, by whom he was put to death.

The last verse of the 15th chapter, means that the disciples, having "kept" the Law—having abided in it from the beginning—have become the possessors of the Spirit, which is the witness, called the witness of the Spirit, that the Law is divine.

JOHN, CHAPTER XVI.

John, Ch. XVI. 1. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye
2. should not be offended. 2. They shall put you out of the
synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth
3. you, will think that he doeth God service. 3. And these
things will they do unto you, because they have not known
4. the Father, nor me. 4. But these things have I told you,
that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told
you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the
5. beginning because I was with you. 5. But now I go my
way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me,
6. Whither goest thou? 6. But because I have said these
7. things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. 7. Nevertheless,
I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I
go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come
8. unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8.
And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and
9. of righteousness, and of judgment: 9. Of sin, because they
10. believed not on me; 10. Of righteousness, because I go to
11. my Father, and ye see me no more; 11. Of judgment, because
12. the prince of this world is judged. 12. I have yet
many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.
13. 13. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will
guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself;
but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will
14. shew you things to come. 14. He shall glorify me: for he
15. shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. 15. All
things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that
16. he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. 16. A
little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little
17. while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. 17.
Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is

this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not
see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and,
18. Because I go to the Father? 18. They said therefore, What
is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he
19. saith. 19. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask
him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves
of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and
20. again, a little while, and ye shall see me? 20. Verily,
verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but
the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your
21. sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21. A woman when she
is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as
soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no
more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.
22. 22. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you
again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man
23. taketh from you. 23. And in that day ye shall ask me
nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye
24. shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you. 24.
Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye
25. shall receive, that your joy may be full. 25. These things
have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh
when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall
26. shew you plainly of the Father. 26. At that day ye shall
ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the
27. Father for you: 27. For the Father himself loveth you,
because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came
28. out from God. 28. I came forth from the Father, and am
come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to
29. the Father. 29. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speak-
30. est thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. 30. Now are we
sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any
man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest
31. forth from God. 31. Jesus answered them, Do ye now be-
32. lieve? 32. Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that
ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave
me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is
33. with me. 33. These things I have spoken unto you, that
in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have
tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the
world.

THE 2d verse of the 16th chapter of John contains a declaration that, The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth GOD service,—which has a precise parallel in the 7th Book of Plato's Republic; where the Teacher, speaking of those who might seek to lead *upward* to the *light* [called a liberation from captivity—the captivity of sin, or of the world in an outward sense], would be exposed to be put to death by those who would feel that "they *ought* to put them to death, if they could get them into their hands."

In the 3d verse, the usual reason is given for the persecution to which the disciples of Truth were exposed, that those of the Synagogue "have not known the Father nor me."

These *two* are the Law, and the Spirit or Father of the Law; and these are the much-talked-of two witnesses.

The Spirit is the Father of the Letter, and this we have seen called the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and also the Spirit of Truth. This is the LORD, and the ever present Life. It is invisibly present in all things, and for this reason cannot have a history limited in time and space; and yet it may be personified and its power and grace may be shadowed out in mythical histories like those of the gospel.

The Truth itself is not seen in the history, as such; and yet, while contemplating the history, the Truth may rise into consciousness as if from it; and this is the Son of man seen coming in the clouds. We see

John the Evangelist representing in his history a certain man, John, "sent from God." Let us suppose this John to be the Law personified in its Letter, symbolized by water. This Law teaches or witnesses a certain divine light or Truth, which it is not itself. We are supposed to have the Law before us, where we read many wonderful things; but in the midst of it all, by listening as it were in the Spirit, the Baptist seems to whisper, what? certain characteristics of *him* "of whom" he spake (ch. i. 15).

The Baptist is a witness and speaks of *him* who cometh after himself, but was before himself. Who is it, of whom he speaks?

We may pause and meditate upon this, when even the disciples in a later chapter (viii. 27) understood not that Christ himself, by the expression "him," spake of the Father.

Christ tells the Jews to "search the Scriptures" (John v. 30), "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me:" but he does not speak of the gospels, for they were not yet written. The Scriptures testify, or witness (the office of the Baptist), of *one* who, in his own person, is represented as referring the Jews "to the Law and to the testimony."

This Law the Evangelist has divided into two, as it were, and represented the Letter by the Baptist, and the Truth to which the Letter testifies, by Christ, who, in the name of the Law or the Scriptures, refers to the Scriptures which are to be searched, &c.

Let us then search the Scriptures, old and new; and we find that the Evangelist places two disciples of John standing with him, and we see them in the Spirit, as they "hear" John speak of his truth under certain symbols, the Lamb and the Dove.

Can we not see what the Evangelist means? If we cannot see this apart from the history, that is, independently of it as authority, then nothing is more certain than that we see the gospel in the flesh and not in the Spirit.

There is something indicated in the gospel, which is not expressed; and this something is of such a nature, that, when written, it is no longer what it was; but it may be a testimony, or a witness of it, somewhat as the visible world is the witness of the invisible world; and of these two, personified, the gospel itself may be considered an exposition, the Baptist becoming the visible and CHRIST the invisible world; and, seeing this so, let us understand the declaration, I and my Father are one.

When such views are pursued, it is soon acknowledged, that the account in the gospels cannot retain its hold as history; and it is "expedient" that it should be so, as we shall see presently.

Nevertheless, whoever proposes this view is supposed to deny something which the Pharisees, not always dishonestly, imagine is a denial of the very ground of religion itself. They therefore persecute the disciples of the "true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" and (verse 2) often think they are doing GOD service by killing them.

Verse 7. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

We must consider, as we are obliged to repeat again and again, that the Law is twofold, Letter and Spirit; yet essentially these are one, a unity or a harmony. Until they are recognized as a unity, the two are partially distinguishable.

The Law may be seen as written, and yet seen under the conviction of there being a truth underlying it. So long as the Letter is prominent, we mean as a history, its Spirit cannot be said to be distinguished; but, on the other hand, when the Spirit is distinctly seized, the Letter is dissolved, as it were, and "vanishes" as a history. Not that the mere book disappears, for the volume remains, but in another manner hard to be described.

It is indicated not only by Luke in the "vanishing" of JESUS, but by John, as we have often had occasion to observe, in the 3d chapter, in the language (verse 30), He must increase, but I must decrease.

This double operation, in its principle, is, in fact, simultaneous; but in referring to it by ordinary language, expressing time-relations, it may be said with propriety that, in order to the coming of the Truth, its visible representative must depart.

When this subject is seen as John saw it, the student will perfectly understand the difference between the baptism by water and that by fire. Then he will have passed to *the other side*, and while he holds a certain

Truth, he will feel that the Truth holds him. He will then understand how inadequate language is for the expression of the Truth, except by imagery and symbolism. And now it is that the written Scriptures begin indeed to show their inner light, and are seen to pass from water to wine.

Those who look upon the gospel as the history of a real person, see the passages referring to CHRIST'S going and coming, as prophetic of his death and resurrection ; and this expresses the Truth also but not as mere history.

As mere history it would be a "fact accomplished," forever in the past; and could never be any thing but the past—like the history of Cæsar or any other history. The alleged prophecies of it and the fulfilment of the prophecies would be equally in the past, and would be constantly receding in the progress of time, under the disadvantages, in point of evidence, which necessarily cluster around all history.

It is always a plausible assumption with respect to the recorded past, that the historian, writing after the facts, might provide for the events already contemplated, by an artistic anticipation of them—just as we see in profane dramas, the poet provides often in the very first act for the last.

But it is said, that the gospel is not like any profane drama ever given to the world, and recites a history unlike any other ever recorded from the beginning of time.

If this is really so, it would rather be a reason for separating it from all history, as such, and thus studying it from another point of view ; but, in fact, it may appear that the real subject of the gospel has always been dealt with mythically and symbolically ; and when the subject is once understood, it may prove that there has been an entire family of writers in the world who have expressed themselves exclusively in parables and similitudes, while treating of life, death, and immortality—expressions which may be considered as represented by the Father, the Baptist, and Christ, these three being mysteriously One.

The simple truth is, with respect to the gospels, not that they record a veritable life as the fulfilment of ancient prophecies, but that the authors of the gospels designed to present in Christ an image of the invisible truth which they saw taught in the Law, and obscurely discoursed about by the Prophets ; both the Law and the Prophets teaching but one essential truth—not a history, but the life of all history. Hence the remarkable conclusion of the gospel of John :

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

We may be sure that this passage does not refer to a historical person.

There is no design, by what has been just said, to institute a comparison between the gospels and profane dramas. It is only asserted that, in regard to what may appear to be the fulfilment of prophecy in the gospels, it is easily conceivable that it might have been part and parcel of the conception of the gospel, as it lay unwritten in the mind of the writer: and that it was not so, it must be always impossible to show, since the whole now lies, as history, confessedly in the past.

As a myth, on the contrary, it is contended that the seeming history encloses a vital truth, now living for those who use the proper means for discovering it.

Verse 12 intimates that the disciples were yet in pupilage, and unable to bear [to understand or receive] the full blaze of truth. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Verse 13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come [or comes into the soul], he will guide you into all truth:* for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear [that is, whatsoever he shall clearly understand, in allusion to a state of the soul], that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

As the extent of this seeing things to come is not stated, we are at liberty to consider it as limited to the natural powers within the compass of enlightened wisdom.

Verse 14. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

This means that, by the witness of the Spirit, as heretofore explained, the truth of the Law is established, to its glory; while the same Spirit may understandingly enter the Law, and explain portions of it to others less acquainted with it. The same Spirit is said, in chapter x. 9, to go in and out (of the Law) and find pasture [that is, the inner Truth of the Letter].

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* Vide Part First, p. 284.

In the verses following the 14th, we read more of CHRIST's being not seen and then seen: the meaning of which, as already repeatedly explained, is, that while the soul is in a transit state with respect to the truth, the Letter will appear to rise and fall in importance according as the view is historical or spiritual.

The language here is:

Verse 16. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to my Father.

Verse 17. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to my Father?

Verse 18. They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We cannot tell what he saith.

These verses may be considered as describing the transition from the Letter into the Spirit. At first the Letter is seen and is revered as the Truth. It then passes under the influence of a doubt, and is said not to be seen. This endures for a little time, when its inner Truth becomes visible; CHRIST is manifested or recognized, and this is expressed in the words, And, again, a little while and ye shall see me;—that is, as the Spirit. Because I go to my Father, means, that the Spirit is seen to be one with the Father.

As a symbolism carried forward to the end, this may indicate something of which no one who ever knew it, as the mystic writers say on this subject has ever declared any thing,—an allusion to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.

In verse 21 we find the simile of a woman in labor: which may remind the students of Plato of the similar figure employed by Socrates in Theætetus.

Socrates called his art of teaching the art of the midwife; because, according to his philosophy, no man could learn any thing who had not a seed of the knowledge in himself: and the art of Socrates consisted in bringing the seed into life and action. A soul, therefore, acquiring great truths, was compared to a woman in labor; and Socrates compared himself to his mother, who, he tells us, was a midwife.

To ask the Father (verse 23) for any thing in the name of the Son, means, to ask consistently with the Law, which must be considered as expressing the will of GOD. To love the Law [of the LORD] and to ask any thing, is to ask in harmony with the Law.

If any other than this is the true sense, then who has ever been a disciple? For whose prayer has ever been heard, except when the prayer has been in accordance or in harmony with the will of GOD? The use of the words, *in my name*, implies that there is a condition to the prayer. That condition is the Law itself, as the will of GOD, and whoever asks what the Law in its Spirit concedes shall not ask in vain.

Verse 27. For the Father himself loveth you [but the reason is given], because ye have loved [the Law, whose Father is the Spirit of Truth], and ye have believed that [the Law] came from God.

Verse 28. I [the Law] came forth from the Father [or was written by Holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit], and am come into the world : again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

While this may be understood as said of the Law, the reader must consider another symbolism intended; for a symbol may have more than one interpretation. Some consider all nature to be but one grand symbol; and all subordinate things are looked upon as images of it, and they thus see but one truth in the universe.

In verse 25 of this chapter, Jesus says, These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs.

We have, then, been reading proverbs through perhaps the whole of this teaching! The gospel says so. If any part of this teaching is not in parables or proverbs, where is the line to be drawn which shall separate the open from the esoteric teaching? The gospel itself gives us no rule for making such a separation; but, on the contrary, every thing confirms the express declaration that the gospel is a teaching by proverbs.

After conducting the disciples to a certain point, *by proverbs*, Jesus asks (verse 31), Do ye now believe? meaning, do ye now believe in the divinity of the Law, which teaches a doctrine of life.

He then tells the disciples (verse 32), that they shall all be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave

[me] alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

This also is true to nature. While men are associated together in a common doctrine, they feel bound together and, to some extent, they lean upon each other, and derive strength from each other; but the mystery of life is not thereby explained, and a time comes to every one when all external attachments and ties are snapped asunder, and each individual soul stands alone in the presence of the Infinite.

Then it is, if not before, that man feels the force of the injunction: Place not thy affections upon things below. Then it is, also, that intellectual pride gives away, and the soul has but one recourse, and needs to feel what is expressed in the gospel: I am not alone, because the Father is with me. But the Father is with those who love Him, or whose love of nature is conceived in Him.

JOHN, CHAPTER XVII.

John, Ch. XVII. 1. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his
eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glo-
2. rify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2. As
thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should
give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.
3. 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the
only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
4. 4. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the
5. work which thou gavest me to do. 5. And now, O Father,
glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which
6. I had with thee before the world was. 6. I have mani-
fested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out
of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me;
7. and they have kept thy word. 7. Now they have known
that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee:
8. 8. For I have given unto them the words which thou
gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known
surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed
9. that thou didst send me. 9. I pray for them: I pray not
for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for
10. they are thine. 10. And all mine are thine, and thine are
11. mine; and I am glorified in them. 11. And now I am no
more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come
to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those
whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we
12. *are*. 12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them
in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and
none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the
13. scripture might be fulfilled. 13. And now come I to thee,
and these things I speak in the world, that they might
14. have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14. I have given

them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because
they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.
15. 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the
world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.
16. 16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the
17. world. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word
18. is truth. 18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even
19. so have I also sent them into the world. 19. And for
their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanc-
20. tified through the truth. 20. Neither pray I for these
alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through
21. their word: 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father,
art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in
us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
22. 22. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given
23. them; that they may be one, even as we are one; 23. I
in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect
in one; and that the world may know that thou hast
sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.
24. 24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me
be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory
which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the
25. foundation of the world. 25. O righteous Father, the
world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and
26. these have known that thou hast sent me. 26. And I have
declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it:* that the
love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and
I in them.

The 17th chapter concludes the principal portion of the oral teaching of Jesus in the gospel of John; and the student cannot but have seen how the instruction has advanced with increasing solemnity towards some awful tragedy.

The instruction designed to be given is based upon the Hebrew sacred Law, but with the object of bringing to life in the soul the life of the Law. The aim of the teacher was to impress upon the "brethren" [the disciples of Truth] the supreme importance and sacredness of the Law; not as a historical question and not as a speculative problem, but as an expression of the truth, having an immediate relation to each member of the society; and yet so that each individual who received the truth should realize the possession, not as the gift of man or as depending upon mere human teaching, but as "it is indeed the gift of God," to whom alone, in the language of St. Paul, the disciple was called upon to give the glory.

Verse 1. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee:

Verse 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Verse 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee [the Spirit of Truth] the only true God, and Jesus Christ [the sacred Law] whom thou hast sent.

Verse 4. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

The Law is here supposed to have accomplished its purpose—that of communicating its own Spirit [the Spirit of Truth] to its followers. This purpose having been accomplished, the drama must tend to a close.

Verse 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I [as the Spirit of Truth, the Word] had with thee before the world was.

This may remind us of Ecclus. xxiv. 9, where Wisdom, personified, says: He created me from the beginning, before the world, and I shall never fail.

Verse 6. I [the Law] have manifested [that is, I have made known] thy name [thy Truth] unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word [that is, the Word of the Law].

This refers to those who have been moved by the Spirit of Truth to "abide" in the Law, this Spirit being regarded as a grace, as not being of the will of man, but of the power of GOD.

In this 6th verse we have again the language observed in the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, where Wisdom, personified, says, I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children *which are named of him.* The use of this language in Ecclesiasticus may teach us to put a right estimate upon its use in the gospel, and *vice versa.*

Verse 7. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

That is, the teaching is supposed completed by which the followers of Truth have become convinced [or "believe"] that the Law is divine, as having been written in the Spirit of Truth, this Spirit being the life or internal sense of the Scriptures. This life, now communicated, is from GOD; but, instrumentally, it comes through the Law, which stands as the mediator between GOD and man. The Law, as mediator, is thus, in its Spirit, the Holy One of Israel and the Saviour.

Verse 8. For I have given unto them the words which thou [the Spirit of Truth] gavest me [dictated or caused to be written in me]; and they have received them, and [having received them and obeyed them, they] have known surely [by the witness of the Spirit, the fruit of right living, according to the Law], that I [the Law] came out from thee [the Spirit of Truth], and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Thus we see, also, in Luke xxiv. 45, that the Spirit of Truth is said to have opened the understanding of the "eleven," that *they might understand the Scriptures*, the object of each gospel being to explain, though mystically, the Hebrew sacred Scriptures to the "brethren" of the Essene society.

Verse 9. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

As a person, one might wish here that the prayer of the Divine One might in charity have been extended to the world, more in need of it we might suppose than the favored followers of the Holy One, who had both witnessed his miraculous power and received his oral instruction. But this is not a history; and, as a myth, it may be proper enough to limit the prayer, proceeding from the representative of the Law, to those who knew and followed the "precepts" of the Law; the "world," not prayed for, being the *without*, who knew not the Law, and whom the Law did not judge (John viii. 15). The *without* are a law unto themselves (Rom. ii. 14).

Verse 10. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

This expresses the unity of Spirit in which all those were who "abided" in the Law. This is soon to be repeated in another form.

Verse 11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.

This implies that the One had come that was to be preferred before the Baptist, at whose coming the Baptist was to "decrease"—the Baptist being also the schoolmaster, referred to by St. Paul, who was no longer needed after having led its followers to CHRIST; for the Baptist and CHRIST are one and the same; to wit, the Law seen as twofold. The prayer continues:

Holy Father, keep through thine own name [through the Spirit of Truth, the Letter being supposed to be superseded by the higher Law, or Light, that is, the Spirit of Truth—keep] those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

That is, One in the Spirit of Truth; for, so far as men agree in the Spirit of Truth, they are in harmony not only with each other but with the Father.

Verse 12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name.

That is, the Law, while it was obeyed, kept its followers, in the name of its Spirit, unspotted from the world: but now the Law speaks as if it had brought to life in its followers its own Spirit of Truth, and takes leave of them with the prayer just recited, that they might not fall away from the Spirit of Truth, to which they are supposed to have attained; for whoever reaches this state and then falls away from it—his after state is worse than the first (Matt. xii. 45; Luke xi. 26; 2 Pet. ii. 20).

The latter part of verse 12 seems dramatic, it being designed to cause one of the twelve to betray JESUS, although the necessity for this, except for dramatic purposes, is not very apparent, since JESUS has been exhibited openly as teaching in the presence of his enemies, who could not need therefore the services of a betrayer to make his person known.

As a myth, however, this is of no importance; the purpose of the Evangelist, as an Essene, contemplating an exhibition of the murder of religion by the forms and superstitions of the priests and Pharisees, who are made the authors of the tragedy—as described in the 12th Section of the first Part of this work.

We must remark that, in symbolical writings, the authors often give expression to shades of opinion in their own minds which may at first easily escape detection by the reader, but which subsequently come to light, as the subject comes to be better understood. In this respect, the gospels do not differ from other writings requiring study and contemplation before their sense becomes known. On the contrary, above all other writings in the world the gospels require the most careful and contemplative study before their meaning can be apprehended.

We make this remark here in order to suggest that the instrumentality of Judas, one of the twelve, in betraying Jesus may indicate the opinion of the Evangelists, that the fidelity or truth of man is never lost but through or by means of an element in his own composition.

It is an important principle that the actual truthfulness of one's own nature can never be compromised by the agency of principles absolutely foreign to it; and this may be considered as intimated in the sacred drama, by the exhibition of one of the twelve as a traitor; while, nevertheless, the Spirit of Truth is never immediately an agent in its own death, but remains the living principle, through which the dead are revived.

Verse 13. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

Verse 14. I [the written Law] have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I [the Spirit] am not of the world.

The followers of the Law are supposed now to be in possession of the Spirit.

Verse 15. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

That is, from the evil of the world; for one object of the Law was to protect or "save" man from sin and evil (John xii. 47).

Verse 16. They are not of the world [being of the

Spirit, that is, they live in the Spirit of Truth], even as I am not of the world.

Verse 17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is Truth.

The Word here referred to, is the Word of the Law; and this, in the 119th Psalm, verse 142, is called Truth—Thy Law is the Truth. It is often called the Word of the Lord, and was the only measure of truth known or recognized by the Jew.

Verse 18. As thou hast sent me [the Law] into the world, even so have I sent them into the world.

Verse 19. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

In chapter viii. 32, the Teacher tells his hearers that the Truth shall make them free, and in verse 36 we read, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Here, in chapter xvii., this condition is supposed to be attained.

It is the Truth, the Spirit of Truth, that frees the soul from the bondage, the slavery of error.

Verse 20. Neither pray I for those alone; but for them also which shall believe on me [on the Law] through their word:

Verse 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father [the Spirit in which the Law is written], art in me [the Law], and I in thee, that they also may be one in us [that is, one in the Spirit of Truth]: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

The prayer is, that by the unity of life in those who follow the Law, the world may be convinced of the divinity of the Law—judging by its fruits (John xiv. 11),—and thus is the Law glorified.

Verse 22. And the glory [the divine Truth] which thou gavest me, I have given them [that is, the Spirit of Truth, in which the Law is written, has communicated itself to its followers]; that they may be one, even as we are one.

Verse 23. I [the Spirit] in them, and thou [the same Spirit or Father of the Law] in me, that they [the followers of the Law in its Spirit] may be made perfect in one [Spirit]; and that the world [by witnessing the unity and peace of the *brethren*] may know that thou hast sent me [that the Spirit of Truth has sent the Law], and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

Verse 24. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Verse 25. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

Verse 26. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

In these concluding verses of the 17th chapter of John, the author is reminded again of the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, where *Wisdom* is personified as speaking, saying, of the Creator of all things, He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail. This is the Word and the Light, which is personified in John as speaking in the name of CHRIST. In Ecclesiasticus, the teaching, in the name of Wisdom, is expressly referred to the "book of the covenant of the most high GOD, even the Law which Moses commanded as an heritage unto the congregations of Jacob."

And then Wisdom speaks as a teacher:

Verse 24. Faint not to be strong in the LORD [and this means the Wisdom of the Law, as the Holy One of Israel]: that he may confirm you, cleave unto him [that is, abide in the vine, as expressed in the 15th chapter of John]: for the LORD Almighty is GOD alone, and beside him there is no other Saviour.

This Saviour is the Law in its Wisdom, or its Spirit, personified in CHRIST, who in many places repeats almost the very language of Ecclesiasticus. "Come unto me [says Wisdom] all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits. For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honeycomb. They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty:"—for, in feasting upon divine truth, there is no satiety.

The Law, still personified as speaking in the name of the Saviour, says:

Verse 25. He filleth all things with his Wisdom, as Phison, and as Tigris in the time of new fruits.

Verse 26. He maketh the understanding to abound like Euphrates, and as Jordan in the time of the harvest.

Verse 27. He maketh the doctrine of knowledge [as seen in the Law] appear as the Light, and as Geon in the time of vintage.

Verse 28. The first man knew her not perfectly: no more shall the last find her out [that is, perfectly].

Verse 29. For her thoughts are more than the sea and her counsels profounder than the great deep.

Verse 30. I also came out as a brook from a river, and as a conduit into a garden.

Verse 31. I said, I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed: and, lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea.

Verse 32. I will yet make doctrine to shine as the morning, and will send forth her light afar off.

Verse 33. I will yet pour out doctrine as prophecy, and leave it to all ages for ever.

Verse 34. Behold that I have not laboured for myself only, but for all them that seek wisdom.

From verse 30, it is simply the man, the teacher, speaking in his own name, confident of the immortal Truth or light that animated him; and that Truth he saw in the Law. He had seen it as a brook [the mustard seed] which became a river, and at last a sea, the boundless sea, the great ocean of life.

In a somewhat similar manner the Evangelist, at the close of the 17th chapter, may be considered as coming forth and uttering the prayer of the teacher in behalf of the initiates, who must now be considered as among the perfect, the "free."

The concluding declaration, I have declared unto them [the followers of the Law] thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them—is a repetition of the declaration in a preceding verse, I have manifested thy name [that is, thy Truth]. Christ, as the Law, makes known or manifests the Truth of God; and is here represented as declaring the purpose of the Law, to wit: that the love which prompted the Law, and which is said figuratively to be in the Law, may be in its followers. That the Law not only has declared the Truth, but will declare it, means that the Law is a perpetual gift of God, and will continue to declare the Truth from generation to generation.

The student cannot but notice how steadily this teaching has advanced towards a certain unity, indications of which may be seen in many places in the gospels. Let us not suppose that this can be easily understood by mere reading about it.

The brotherhood, to whom the gospels are supposed to have been addressed, composed a mystic sect among the Jews, who sought to reach, through piety and purification, a peace which the world knew not of.

We see in Luke vi. 40, that, The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

In John this is expressed differently, but the teaching is the same in both gospels. In John (chapter xv. 15), Christ says, Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but

I have called you friends. That is, the initiates are here supposed to be so far advanced as to rise to the level of the teacher: they are "one" with him as he is one with the Father: they are "friends," or, as Luke expresses it, they have become "as the master."

This is only expressed with yet other variations in the 17th chapter, in the prayer just recited, that the disciples may be one [or a brotherhood], that they might be loved by the Father, as the Father loved the Teacher, who is the principle of love personified.

Here is a difficult point to understand, the author confesses, but the student need not be discouraged.

The true Teacher is "within," where the kingdom of heaven is said to be (Luke xvii. 21). This Teacher is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This Light expressed itself in certain Hebrew books, which became a substitute for the true Teacher, and was called a witness, in the character of John the Baptist, until the true Teacher became known. It *was* so, formerly: it *is* not otherwise now, and never shall be otherwise.

When the true Teacher is recognized he is seen to be independent of all books, and it is seen, also, that he was before them.

In John's gospel the Teacher, for the purpose of instruction, is set forward as a person, representing the Law which originally proceeded from him. He is personified, and thus, as a Teacher, leads the initiates to the point of becoming "as the master," or as "friends;"

and this indicates a certain mystical unity, which the student must perceive in himself before he can understand this teaching.

For this purpose it is "expedient" for the Teacher to "go away" (John xvi. 7); that is, the external Teacher, as he appears, either in a person, or as a historical record of a dead past, must yield to the presence of the Light within; and this must be recognized as the principle of the unity which raised the initiates to the level of the master.

Whether this prayer for the unity of the brotherhood came originally from "the man Christ Jesus," who brought to light the grace and truth of the Law (John i. 17), or was attributed to him by the Evangelist, is of no importance in respect to the truth it teaches; for the prayer itself might appropriately have come from the Evangelist himself to his pupils, in the name of the Spirit which is one and the same in both the Teacher and the pupil, when the latter has become "perfect," as expressed in Luke.

Where Christ says (Matt. xxiii. 8): Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren—he speaks not as Christ the Spirit; but he speaks of Christ: that is, as a teacher, he speaks of the Spirit he represented.

We need not necessarily suppose that Christ, as a person, used this language in a supernatural character; but Matthew, for the purpose of teaching, puts this language into the mouth of Christ, who is set forth to speak in the name of the Spirit which, in the end, we must see is one and the same in both the master and the disciple.

When the student recognizes that teacher in himself, the mystery will be explained.

To this end it might perhaps be well to take some one distinct problem from Scripture, and seek an answer to it: and then another and another problem; and it will be found that each succeeding question will be more and more readily answered after the first has been properly brought to a solution.

But let the student not be in haste: for—Behold, saith the Lord God, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-*stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

The 17th chapter of John concludes properly the oral teaching of the gospel, the remaining chapters being principally of dramatic import, to illustrate the death and resurrection of the Spirit of Truth, murdered by Jewish ceremonies and superstitions—the scene illustrating, at the same time, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

Many philosophers have endeavored to express or develop the idea of the *Love* doctrine, as the true *corner-stone*, laid in Zion—the only principle of a blessed life. This idea is not peculiar to the Christian faith. It is the subject of Plato's Symposium, and makes a large portion of Persian mysticism, as may be seen in the poems of Hafiz and others. This doctrine [of love] is the very principle developed in the Ethics of Spinoza, whose philosophy may be said to culminate in the following passage to be found in the last Part of his work:

"In so far as God loves himself, He loves men [or mankind], and consequently the love of God for men, and the love of the mind for God, are one and the same."

In all ages where men have attempted to express any thing of this mystery, they have passed "to the other side," and having measurably ceased to be of "this world," their language has become mystical, and they are not usually understood. As the blessing of love lies in the love itself, it ought to be manifest that it cannot be induced, or brought into life, by suggestions pointing to other rewards—a regard for which, when exclusive, is precisely the condition opposed to a divine life. Hence the wonderful proposition of Spinoza in the Ethics just referred to: "He who loves God aright, does not ask that God shall love him in return;" that is, he asks no reward beyond the love itself: and the philosopher concludes his work with the remark—"If the way that leads to this seem arduous, still, it may be trod: and arduous it must be which is so rarely found. For if our supreme good were at hand, and could be easily attained, how should it be neglected by almost all? But all excellent things are as difficult as rare."

The doctrine of a certain mystical *unity*, is one of the most important tenets of the Neo-platonism which prevailed at Alexandria during the early period of the Church; and whatever conclusion a student may arrive at with respect to a possible connection between the authors of the gospels and the Alexandrian Platonists, it cannot be otherwise than interesting to observe the correspondences between Platonism and Christianity.

Among the Neo-platonists we find Plotinus the most earnest in endeavoring to set forth the unity. He refers to it again and again, laboring under the disadvantage of endeavoring to describe a spiritual experience which, as he admits, words cannot adequately exhibit; but which is typified perfectly in John, to those who will see the inner sense of this gospel.

It may interest the reader to see a few passages from Plotinus on this subject, though they are not recited with the slightest idea of placing the name of this philosopher, as a teacher, in competition with that of John, who has no rival. The passages may be read rather as a contrast to John's manner of teaching, than as furnishing a parallelism, although the doctrine seems to be similar.

Plotinus, following Plato, places the ONE above intellect,—if any one can discover what this means,—and he says, of some principle in man by which the One is discovered, that "that which sees, is itself the thing which is seen."

After struggling to give some name to the One, he concludes that, "properly speaking, there is no name for it, because nothing can be asserted of it,"—just as we read in the Theætetus.

"How, therefore [says Plotinus], can we speak of it? We are able indeed to say something *of* it, but we do not speak *it*," and he carries on this mode of speaking *of* it, through many pages, practically showing that he can really say nothing adequately of it. He calls it, indeed, the GOOD; but immediately denies that it is any particular or definable good; and in a similar manner he affirms and denies in many ways; thus, he says:

"The ONE is not absent from any thing, and yet is separated from all things; so that it is present and yet not present with them. But it is present [he continues] with those things that are able, and are prepared to receive it, so that they become congruous, and as it were pass into contact with it, through similitude and a certain [?] inherent power allied to that which is imparted by the ONE. When, therefore, the soul is disposed in such a way as she was when she came from the ONE, then she is able to perceive it, as far as it is naturally capable of being seen. He, therefore, who has not arrived thither * * * may consider himself as the cause of his disappointment, and *should endeavor by separating himself from all things to be alone.*"

He says: "We denominate it the ONE from necessity, in order that we may signify it to each other by a name, and may be led to an indivisible conception, being anxious that our soul may be one."

"The principle of all things [he says], not having any *difference*, is always present; but we are present with it when we have no *difference*."

"In the intelligible world [Plotinus tells us], the true object of love is to be found, with which we may be conjoined, which we may participate, and truly possess, and which is not externally enveloped in flesh. *He who knows this, will know what I say*, and will be convinced that the soul has then another life."

"Every soul [he continues] is a Venus. And this, the nativity of Venus, and Love who was born at the same time with her, obscurely signify. The soul, therefore, when in a condition conformable to nature, loves GOD, wishing to be united to him, being as it were the desire of *a beautiful virgin to be conjoined with a beautiful Love*."

Plotinus admits that this *union* is "a spectacle difficult to explain by words," and after exhausting his powers in the use of language he finally calls it "*a flight of the alone to the alone*."

He says: "We proceed to the ONE, through purifications, prayer, and a soul adorned with every virtue; it is an ascent to the intelligible world, an establishment in it, and a banqueting on the divine food which is there. But whoever is a spectator of this [divine] world, becomes at one and the same time both the spectator and the spectacle." * * * "He will, however, be ignorant of the manner in which he sees it; but the vision filling the eyes with LIGHT, will prevent him from seeing any thing else, since the *light* itself will be the object of his vision. For then one thing will not be in him that which is seen, and another the light of the visible object; nor will it be intellect, and that which intellect perceives; but it will be a splendor generating these things afterwards and abiding in itself."

We may notice here that the philosopher speaks of the vision, as a *light*, and as a result of certain purifications; and we may naturally ask how far this *light* differs from that which is spoken of by the Baptist as coming after him, which the Evangelist makes no attempt to define, otherwise than by certain characteristics, symbolized by the Lamb and the Dove, whose *purifying* influence may be supposed referred to in the passage (John xv. 3). Now ye are *clean* through the Word which I have spoken unto you.

If we look upon the Evangelist as a teacher, mystically teaching the Hebrew Law, as an instrument of purification, it would seem to be within the limits of possibility, that the real experience of Plotinus and of John may have approximated each other; but while the philosopher labors *to describe the indescribable*, the Evangelist, having no doubt a clearer vision of it, exhibits it in a mythical and mysterious history, of which John himself is the true subject; for we are soon to see him mystically married to the Mother of Jesus; and this we must regard as a method of teaching that unity by a mimetic exhibition, which we have just seen brought out by oral teaching in the 17th chapter.

Before the reader decides definitively upon this, let him read what we have yet to say of the 19th chapter, in connection with the problem, which the reader himself must solve, by which he may understand the meaning of St. Paul in his allusion to the Jerusalem which is above, and the mother of us all (Gal. iv. 26), and that other mysterious passage in allusion to the mystical marriage (Ephes. v. 32). This is a great mystery: but I speak of CHRIST and the Church.

The reader may be assured that the problem involved in these passages has never been and never will be solved historically, until it becomes a part of his own incommunicable history.

To the question, as to how the Spirit of Truth is to be known, we can only answer, that, in the first instance, it is self-evidencing, or the evidence of itself. It is then known to be the Spirit of the Law, or of the Scriptures, by the fact that it explains or interprets the Scriptures.

This is indicated in the story of the two disciples [one man, as already explained] going to Emmaus, who knew the Spirit "in breaking of bread" (Luke xxiv. 30 and 35): which means,—the interpretation which the Spirit makes of the Letter, symbolized by bread. The story of the disciples going to Emmaus, one of the most instructive or suggestive in the gospel, is interpreted in the 13th Section of Part First of this work.

JOHN, CHAPTER XVIII.

John, Ch. XVIII. 1. When Jesus had spoken these words, he
went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where
was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.
2. 2. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place:
for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples.
3. 3. Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers
from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither
4. with lanterns, and torches, and weapons. 4. Jesus therefore,
knowing all things that should come upon him, went
5. forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5. They answered
him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I
am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with
6. them. 6. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am
7. *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground. 7. Then
asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said,
8. Jesus of Nazareth. 8. Jesus answered, I have told you
that I am *he*. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their
9. way: 9. That the saying might be fulfilled which he
spake, Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.
10. 10. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote
the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The
11. servant's name was Malchus. 11. Then said Jesus unto
Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which
12. my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? 12. Then
the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews took
13. Jesus, and bound him, 13. And led him away to Annas
first, (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the
14. high priest that same year.) 14. Now Caiaphas was he
which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that
15. one man should die for the people. 15. ¶ And Simon
Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple. That

disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in
16. with Jesus, into the palace of the high priest. 16. But
Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that
other disciple which was known unto the high priest, and
spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.
17. 17. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter,
Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I
18. am not. 18. And the servants and officers stood there,
who had made a fire of coals; (for it was cold) and they
warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and
19. warmed himself. 19. ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus
20. of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 20. Jesus answered
him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the
synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always
21. resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21. Why askest
thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said
22. unto them: behold, they know what I said. 22. And
when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood
by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest
23. thou the high priest so? 23. Jesus answered him,
If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well,
24. why smitest thou me? 24 (Now Annas had sent him
25. bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.) 25. And Simon
Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore
unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied
26. *it*, and said, I am not. 26. One of the servants of
the high priest (being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut
off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?
27. 27. Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock
28. crew. 28. ¶ Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the
hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves
went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled;
29. but that they might eat the passover. 29. Pilate
then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring
30. ye against this man? 30. They answered and said unto
him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered
31. him up unto thee. 31. Then said Pilate unto them,
Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The
Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put
32. any man to death: 32. That the saying of Jesus might be
fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should

33. die. 33. Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall
again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the
34. King of the Jews? 34. Jesus answered him, Sayest thou
this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?
35. 35. Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation,
and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me. What
36. hast thou done? 36. Jesus answered, My kingdom is not
of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then
would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to
37. the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37. Pilate
therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus
answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was
I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I
should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the
38. truth, heareth my voice. 38. Pilate saith unto him, What
is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again
unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault
39. *at all.* 39. But ye have a custom that I should release
unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release
40. unto you the King of the Jews? 40. Then cried they
all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas
was a robber.

JOHN, CHAPTER XIX.

JOHN, CH. XIX. 1. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged
2. *him.* 2. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and
put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,
3. 3. And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him
4. with their hands. 4. Pilate therefore went forth again,
and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you,
5. that ye may know that I find no fault in him. 5. Then
came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the
purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the
6. man! 6. When the chief priests therefore and officers
saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*.
Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for
7. I find no fault in him. 7. The Jews answered him, We
have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he
8. made himself the Son of God. 8. ¶ When Pilate there-

9. fore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; 9. And
went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus,
Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.
10. 10. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto
me? knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee,
11. and have power to release thee? 11. Jesus answered,
Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it
were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered
12. me unto thee hath the greater sin. 12. And from thence-
forth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried
out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's
friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh
13. against Cesar. 13. ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that
saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the
judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but
14. in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14. And it was the prepara-
tion of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he
15. saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! 15. But they
cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him.
Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The
chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.
16. 16. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be cru-
17. cified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. 17. And
he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the
place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha:
18. 18. Where they crucified him, and two other with him,
19. on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. 19 ¶ And
Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the
writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF
20. THE JEWS. 20. This title then read many of the Jews:
for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the
city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.
21. 21. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate,
Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am
22. King of the Jews. 22. Pilate answered, What I have
23. written, I have written. 23. ¶ Then the soldiers, when
they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four
parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the
coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.
24. 24. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend
it, but cast lots for it whose it shall be: that the scripture

might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment
among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These
25. things therefore the soldiers did. 25. ¶ Now there stood
by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister,
Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.
26. 26. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple
standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother,
27. Woman, behold thy son! 27. Then saith he to the disciple,
Behold thy mother! And from that hour that dis-
28. ciple took her unto his own *home*. 28. ¶ After this, Jesus
knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the
29. scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29. Now there
was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge
with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his
30. mouth. 30. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar,
he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and
31. gave up the ghost. 31. The Jews therefore, because it
was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain
upon the cross on the sabbath-day, (for that sabbath-day
was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be
32. broken, and *that* they might be taken away. 32. Then
came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of
33. the other which was crucified with him. 33. But when
they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already,
34. they brake not his legs: 34. But one of the soldiers with
a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood
35. and water. 35. And he that saw *it*, bare record, and his
record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye
36. might believe. 36. For these things were done, that the
scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be
37. broken. 37. And again another scripture saith, They
38. shall look on him whom they pierced. 38. ¶ And after
this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but
secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might
take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave.
39. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus. 39. And
there came also Nicodemus (which at the first came to
Jesus by night) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes,
40. about an hundred pound *weight*. 40. Then took they the
body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices,
41. as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41. Now in the

place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in
the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet
42. laid. 42. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the
Jews' preparation-*day;* for the sepulchre was nigh at
hand.

JOHN, CHAPTER XX.

John, Ch. XX. 1. The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene
early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and
2. seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. 2. Then
she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other
disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have
taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not
3. where they have laid him. 3. Peter therefore went forth,
4. and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. 4. So
they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun
5. Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5. And he stooping
down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went
6. he not in. 6. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and
went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie;
7. 7. And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with
the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.
8. 8. Then went in also that other disciple which came first to
9. the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. 9. For as yet they
knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the
10. dead. 10. Then the disciples went away again unto their
11. own home. 11. ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre
weeping: and as she wept she stooped down *and*
12. *looked* into the sepulchre, 12. And seeth two angels in
white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet,
13. where the body of Jesus had lain. 13. And they say unto
her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because
they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where
14. they have laid him. 14. And when she had thus said, she
turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not
15. that it was Jesus. 15. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why
weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to
be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him
hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him

16. away. 16. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.
17. 17. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and
18. *to* my God and your God. 18. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had
19. spoken these things unto her. 19. ¶ Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto
20. them, Peace *be* unto you. 20. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were
21. the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. 21. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath
22. sent me, even so send I you. 22. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye
23. the Holy Ghost. 23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they
24. are retained. 24. ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called
25. Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not be-
26. lieve. 26. ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto
27. you. 27. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust
28. *it* into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. 28. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.
29. 29. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen,
30. and *yet* have believed. 30. ¶ And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not
31. written in this book. 31. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

JOHN, CHAPTER XXI.

John, Ch. XXI. 1. After these things Jesus shewed himself again
to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias: and on this wise
2. shewed he *himself.* 2. There were together Simon Peter,
and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee,
and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.
3. 3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say
unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered
into a ship immediately; and that night they caught
4. nothing. 4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus
stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was
5. Jesus. 5. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye
6. any meat? They answered him, No. 6. And he said unto
them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall
find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to
7. draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7. Therefore that disciple
whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now
when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his*
fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast him-
8. self into the sea. 8. And the other disciples came in a little
ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two
9. hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes. 9. As soon
then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals
10. there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. 10. Jesus saith
11. unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11.
Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great
fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there
12. were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12. Jesus saith
unto them, Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst
13. ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13.
Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and
14. fish likewise. 14. This is now the third time that Jesus
shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from
15. the dead. 15. ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to
Simon Peter, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than
these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that
16. I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16. He
saith to him again the second time, Simon *son* of Jonas,
lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou

knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my
17. sheep. 17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon *son* of
Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said
unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said
unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that
18. I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18.
Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou
girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but
when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands,
and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou
19. wouldest not. 19. This spake he, signifying by what death
he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he
20. saith unto him, Follow me. 20. Then Peter, turning about,
seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also
leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he
21. that betrayeth thee?) 21. Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus,
22. Lord, and what *shall* this man *do?* 22. Jesus saith unto
him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?
23. Follow thou me. 23. Then went this saying abroad among
the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus
said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he
24. tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? 24. This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things:
25. and we know that his testimony is true. 25. And there are
also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they
should be written every one, I suppose that even the world
itself could not contain the books that should be written.
Amen.

The remaining chapters of John, from the 18th inclusive, are dramatic. It is a teaching by action rather than by words.

However strange it may seem to those who are accustomed to regard the last scenes of the gospels as actual history, the author can only look upon them as designed to illustrate certain opinions, entertained by the members of the Essene society. Those opinions rested, in the first instance, upon the Law as a Letter, symbolized by water, and represented by John the Baptist: but they ultimated in a sense of life, as the "light" that cometh after the water-baptism, and was preferred before it, because it was before it (John i. 15).

Light is itself a figurative expression for the higher truth; and, as the Letter was symbolized by water, the higher or inner truth, or light, was symbolized by "fire," and is represented by Christ, who is made, however, to personate the Law as both water and spirit, because, in a certain sense, the letter and its spirit "agree," as the body and soul of man agree.

The Jews saw life in the Law; or, in the Law, as expressed in John v. 39, they thought they had eternal life. This life was personified in Christ, in order to teach the doctrine of life, called the bread of life—as in the Law, indeed, but in the Law according to an esoteric sense, cultivated by the Essene brotherhood.

The Life, though taught in the Law, is truly in man. Hence the Law and man became counterparts, each of the other; and in the gospel they respectively figure each other.

This is the simple ground of the esoteric doctrine of the Essenes; and the gospels were some of their secret books, by which they taught their initiates the doctrine of life, as seen in the Law, which they represented by man: yet not by man as a phenomenal individual, but as Israel; for the Scripture writers recognized the distinction between the individual and the race, man and humanity, as we may see by the passage, The days of the life of man may be numbered: but the days of Israel are innumerable (Ecclus. xxxvii. 25).

For the purpose of the gospel writers, the Law must be considered as *alive;* yet not in its Letter, which, in itself, was considered as dead; but in its Spirit or internal sense.

In short, in the use of the symbols and figures, the Law is man; and, again, man is the Law.

When brought into unison with the Law, by obedience, man sees life in the Law; and the Law is said to give life to the man, who receives it as from the Law, and as coming after the Law; while yet, the life is then seen to be older than the Law, and is "preferred" before it. The Law is first in order, until its life is received; and then it becomes the last, and that which was last becomes the first, as this is expressed in the Revelation.

When man lives without the Law, or denies the Law, he is said to be dead; and he is said to be raised from the dead by the Law, which is supposed to give him its life: while, on the other hand, the denial and repudiation of the Law was figured in the death of the Law itself.

The denial of the Letter on the part of Herod, whose sin was condemned by the Letter, is figured in the beheading of the Baptist: but the crushing of the Spirit of religion, by formalism and pharisaism, is figured by the scene on Mount Calvary.

As man and the Law mutually represent each other, the scene on Mount Calvary, and the rising of the Spirit, as seen by its followers, represent two things: one, the perpetuity of the Law itself, according to the belief of the Jews; the other, the "life everlasting" of those who follow or obey the Law—expressed in the words, Because I live, ye shall live also (John xiv. 19); or, again: As the living Father hath sent me [the Law], and I live by the Father [the Spirit of Truth in the Law]: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me (John vi. 57). To eat the Law, means to *appropriate* it, by a life according to the Law,—expressed in the 15th chapter, by the injunction to "abide in the vine;" for the vine is the Law, as already shown.

The Law, as we have said, is the basis of the subsequent Hebrew sacred writings, the later writings constantly appealing to it, as shown in the Second and Third Sections of this Part. It is personified in several places; as, where Wisdom is represented as teaching in the Proverbs and elsewhere, particularly in the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus.

The prophets, for the most part, speak in the name of the Law which, as seen in its Spirit, they called the LORD. The expression, THUS SAITH THE LORD, means, *thus saith the Law*, as its Spirit was impressed upon the pious consciousness of the teacher; and this was not otherwise where this expression occurs in the Law itself: for the Law was announced under a conscious sense of its Spirit.

The Holy One of Israel, as spoken of in the 1st chapter of Isaiah, and elsewhere, is the Lord, the Wisdom, the Life of the Law. When this, as Wisdom, is personified in the feminine gender, as in Proverbs and elsewhere, it means the eternal Virgin Mother, whose Laws or ways are "everlasting commandments."

When Ezekiel records his having eaten the roll of a book,—he means, that he had appropriated and understood the Law; a book written "within and without," or having a double sense. A "coal of fire touching the lips," is a symbol of the Light or Truth of the Law touching the heart, and waking it into life.

The Law is no less the basis of the gospels, which are illustrations or interpretations of the Law in symbolism; the four gospels differing from each other in some unimportant particulars, and differing from the Law itself in some of their teachings,—indicating a higher stage of civilization, but essentially representing the Spirit of the Law, the Spirit being personified in Christ.

The author considers the fourth gospel a model of symbolical teaching; the first three gospels containing, as he believes or admits, some traditional elements, not perfectly adjusted to the high ideal of the last, the gospel of Love; and he ventures to suggest, that while all Scripture may be "profitable," and should be read with reverence, some portions may be more instructive than others,—among which he would place in the foreground the gospel according to John.

It is not believed to be necessary to follow out the concluding chapters of this gospel, from the 18th inclusive, with minute interpretations of its several representations; because, if the reader has understood the hypothesis used in this work, he will find no serious difficulty in perceiving the inner sense of these chapters without further aid.

Nevertheless, there is one point which must on no account be passed over, for it expresses the very object of the teaching in the gospel of John, and the reader's attention is particularly invited to it.

We have again and again expressed the opinion, that each gospel should be interpreted by itself, each particular gospel being the product of certain general doctrines common to a brotherhood. But the doctrines were expressed through individuals, to each of whom must be conceded some peculiarities in his mode of teaching, and possibly even in his conception of the doctrine—the first three gospels containing, as we have just said, some traditional matter, tending, we must say, rather to cloud than throw light upon the true doctrine.

The truth remains, as we believe, forever entire and whole in its unity. It is the seamless coat. We cannot predicate of it, the more or the less, the better or the worse: but in its manifestation or expression, we find these comparisons appropriate; and, as one man may be better than another, or more able than another, so one writing may be more full and perfect than another, and may thus be said to be better adapted to purposes of instruction.

No one questions this as applied to books, other than the Bible; but such a difference among the books of the Bible itself, very few are willing to admit. But as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were, humanly speaking, four different men, so their writings must be considered severally as distinct from each other, of which, without any offence to truth, we may predicate degrees of excellence.

From this point of view we recognize a higher order of teaching in the gospel of John, than in either of the other gospels; and we attribute this in some degree to the apparent absence of traditional elements, which can only serve, where they prevail in books written for instruction in divine truth, to bring the idea down from heaven and obscure it with an earthy growth, instead of clearing the spiritual atmosphere, through which the soul may discover the mystical ladder, and observe the angels of God ascending and descending.

Those who have kept company with the author in this exposition will, he thinks, hardly doubt his own conviction of the truth of the view he has presented. He has not written this commentary, or whatever it may be called, for the sake of writing; but for the sole purpose of giving expression to certain opinions which stand before his mind as the very Truth.

The reader should approach this subject with calmness and composure, maintaining a certain equanimity as a middle point, on the one side of which, as it were, must be placed his own earnestness as an impelling and not a controlling power; and, on the other side, the Truth he seeks.

This Truth, when seen, is its own evidence, and carries with it an inexpressible charm; for, in one word, in the Truth itself is seen also the true good, inseparably united. A mere external statement of it can do no adequate justice to it, and it is altogether probable that no symbolism of it will ever be presented to the world surpassing in clearness that contained in the gospel of John.

We will now endeavor to point out what we consider the final instruction in the gospel of John; but as a preparation for it, we must call attention once more to the 1st chapter, and especially to those very simple but instructive verses (25 to 27), where we read of two disciples, standing with John the Baptist; and John, seeing Jesus, as he walked, "saith, Behold the Lamb of God; and the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."

We endeavored to show, in our remarks upon these verses, that the two disciples of the Baptist represent but one man, of body and soul; disunited, as yet—lacking the one thing needful. This one man we suppose a student of the Law, in its Letter, seeking to discover its meaning; and, at length, listening, as it were, in spirit, he *hears* the Baptist speak: that is, he *understands* the Law to mean, or signify, in its mysterious teaching, something symbolized by the Lamb; and this is innocence.

Immediately preceding these verses, two characteristics of the Spirit of Truth are indicated, by which we must suppose that the student or disciple is taught, that innocence and Truth, figured by the Lamb and the Dove, are essentially requisite in those who seek an entrance into the kingdom of heaven through what is called the Word of the kingdom; that is, the Law. In this very simple and yet profound indication, we must set the initial or starting point of a disciple of JESUS, who personifies the invisible Spirit of Truth, figured by the emblems of innocence and Truth. The end of the teaching is pointed at in the 19th chapter, as we are about to show.

The intermediate chapters of John may be considered as a course of mystical instruction, the first several chapters being distinctly aimed to exhibit the ignorance of the Pharisees, and their incompetency as teachers, because they "judged after the flesh" (ch. viii. 15), meaning after the Letter. From the Pharisees the Teacher passes to the initiates of the Essenes, and teaches them the doctrine of the *Unity* of the mystical Father, Son, and Spirit, the attainment of which is supposed to be reached through the instrumentality of the Law, represented by CHRIST, whose mother is the invisible Church, called Jerusalem, and Zion, and by many other names.

We treat the gospel as a drama, addressed to the Essenes, and do not suppose that any of the Pharisees were present. They were dramatically introduced, in order to exhibit them to the Essenes as incompetent "guides." They were the blind leading the blind.

That Christ is the bread of life, is a mystical expression for the doctrine of life, called eternal life; a sense of which is the victory over death, because death itself, in the face of true doctrine, takes its place by the side of other phenomena in nature, the soul mysteriously rising above it, and contemplating it as having no power over itself.

How is this to be attained? We are told that it is by following Christ. But this is the same thing as to abide in the vine (ch. xv.); and this, again, is mystical language, by which the Essene initiates were directed to obey the Law; for the vine is the Law. Where Christ speaks of having "received a commandment," and "knows" that the commandment is eternal life, he refers to the Law, obedience to which led to life eternal, or to a sense of life as eternal, the first step towards which is to become innocent and true, as taught in the 1st chapter of John.

Now, the gospel of John is a mystical history or exhibition of the spiritual operation, by which John himself passed into a sense of eternal life.

The Life eternal, or the sense of Life, as eternal, is often compared to a marriage. Swedenborg calls it a conjugial marriage. St. Paul himself speaks of it in the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, under the figure of a marriage. Through several verses, the Apostle seems to treat particularly of marriage; and then explains his true meaning in these remarkable words (verse 32), This is a great mystery: *but I speak of Christ and the Church.*

St. Paul evidently refers to the marriage, that is, to the union of a disciple, whom he calls CHRIST, to the invisible Church, calling the Church in Gal. iv. 26, The Jerusalem which is above and the mother of us all. He calls the disciple CHRIST, because a disciple is supposed to have the Spirit of Truth in himself. This Spirit he calls CHRIST in several places, particularly in 2 Cor. iii. 17; and also where he tells us, Gal. ii. 20, that CHRIST lives in him.

St. Paul also speaks of the Church as the body of CHRIST; and he refers to the Law as the flesh of CHRIST, the invisible Spirit being the CHRIST of both the Law and the Church.

In open language let us say, that the Church, in the New Testament, is the virgin mother of the Spirit, in which the visible Church itself originated; and this is one and the same Spirit in both the Law and the Church; yet not as they are visible: for, as visible, they may be sundered; but the Spirit itself is one and the same, and is incapable of being parted from itself. When the Truth is seen merely in the Letter, it falls short of the unity; and when the Church falls short of the Spirit, it perishes. But the Spirit does not die, and its rise from the ashes of a dead Church may give us a hint for the explanation of the Arabian fable.

The author has but little hope of making this plain to one who looks simply at the Letter, and he feels disposed to implore the reader to cast himself into the midst of the subject, freed from external trammels, with an entire willingness to follow JESUS through even the portals of the grave; and then, after much reflection, and most certainly not without it, the truth may dawn upon it.

We read in several passages of John's gospel, of the disciple whom JESUS loved.

This is John himself, the author of the gospel; and this language is a mode of referring to his own love of JESUS; that is, to his own love of the truth, under the emblems of the Lamb and the Dove; for the Truth loves whoever loves the Truth; or, in the language of Wisdom, keep her and she shall keep thee; or, Exalt her and she shall draw thee after her.

The disciple whom JESUS loved is described as leaning on JESUS' bosom at the supper (John xiii. 23). This is merely a figure of his affectionate devotedness to the truth. He is referred to in several other places, but without being anywhere named. He may nevertheless be said to have indicated himself, as the author of the gospel, in the words (chapter xix. 35):

And he that *saw it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

That which John *saw*, was not an external history, but an internal life; and this is symbolized in the gospel, based nevertheless upon the Law; for, in a mystical sense the Law is man, and man is the Law.

The end aimed at is, as we have said, eternal life: which, in the Law, is figured in several ways; among others by the Passover, as an entrance upon it—a passing over of the natural to the spiritual man; and also by the Sabbath, a certain rest of the soul.

This rest is a rest in God; and this also is figured in many ways, Abraham's bosom being an allusion to it, where the poor (the humble) man was seen in heaven,—heaven itself being this same rest.

It is the ultimate point of instruction in the gospel of John; and the final scene by which or in which it is indicated is introduced by an allusion to the passover.

And it was the preparation of the passover (ch. xix. 14.) This introduces the scene on the *cross*,—itself an emblem of the passover.

By looking carefully at this 19th chapter of John, bearing in mind the hypothesis used throughout in this exposition, we can hardly miss the true teaching, the essence of which may be seen in the three verses commencing at the 25th.

25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his Mother, and his Mother's sister (Mary the wife of Cleophas), and Mary Magdalene.

26. When Jesus therefore saw his Mother, and the disciple standing by, *whom he loved*, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27. Then said he to the disciple, Behold thy Mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

In this brief space is included the very consummation of the gospel teaching, according to John.

In order to see the meaning of this, let us consider John as a follower of the Law, in the Spirit of Truth —the Law being personified in CHRIST, whose commandment is eternal life.

He is the loved disciple; and CHRIST is said to love him, because he loves the truth.

As one who loves the truth, he has followed JESUS: that is, he has followed the Spirit of Truth, as we saw in the 1st chapter, under the symbols of the Lamb and the Dove.

Under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth he has passed through a mysterious spiritual journey, which has brought him to the mystical marriage described by St. Paul.

This we say is indicated by the verses just recited; for, the Mother of JESUS, whom JESUS calls the Mother of the loved disciple, is the Church,—"the Jerusalem above, which is the Mother of us all."

CHRIST may here be considered as representing the Law, in the act of fulfilling its office,—that of bringing its follower, through the Spirit of Truth, into eternal life.

This is figured by the acceptance of the Church, on the part of the disciple, as the gift of the Law.

In the older Scriptures this Life eternal is in many places called Wisdom, particularly in the Proverbs, and in Ecclesiasticus; and we read in the latter, that, He that hath the knowledge of the Law [meaning the

Law of Moses] shall obtain HER. And as a MOTHER shall SHE meet him, and receive him as a wife married of a virgin (ch. xv. 1, 2). In the gospel, this didactic statement is presented in a dramatic form.

St. Paul calls the Law a schoolmaster to bring us to CHRIST; that is, to charity or love, as "the end of the Law;" and he tells us that when the Spirit is received the schoolmaster is no longer needed. He also tells us of leaving CHRIST in the flesh "behind;" evidently meaning the schoolmaster, that is, the Law.

Accordingly, we see here the Law as departing, in the very act of bringing the Church and the disciple into unity.

The Church itself is the mystical bride of the LORD: the Son is the loved disciple, who has received the Spirit of the Church to himself—represented by his taking the mother of JESUS to his own *home*—meaning to his own heart.

The Spirit of Truth has led the disciple to the Church, both by the Law and through the Law, the Spirit of the Law being at one with the Spirit of the Church; and the circle is now completed which unites the disciple with the Father, the same Spirit; for the Law itself, in its Spirit, is the Father.

The Church here spoken of is not the visible Jewish Church, as we have already said, nor any visible Church in particular. It is the invisible Church, referred to by St. Paul as the Jerusalem which is above, and the Mother of us all.

There is another name for this, which might easily be given; but the author feels called upon to leave it for the discovery of those who may feel sufficient interest in these inquiries to seek for it.

The loved disciple, having received the Holy Mother to his *home*, has received Wisdom to his *heart*. Let us recite again a few verses in commendation of Wisdom, the possession of which is described as the greatest of treasures:

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. SHE is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto HER. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew. My son, let them not depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.

Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake HER not, and SHE shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace HER. SHE shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. * * * * Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her, for she is thy life. * * Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman. * * Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? SHE standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths; she crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors: Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be of an understanding heart. * * Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. * * My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures. The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: Rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore hearken, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death. * * If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it. * *

Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away: yea, SHE is easily seen of them that love HER, and found of such as seek her. SHE preventeth [or, goeth before] them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travail: for he shall find her sitting at his doors. To think therefore upon HER is perfection of wisdom: and whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, sheweth herself favourably unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought. For the very true beginning of her is the desire of discipline; and the care of discipline is love; And love is the keeping of her laws; and the giving heed unto her laws is the assurance of incorruption; And incorruption maketh us near unto God. Therefore the desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom. * * As for wisdom, what SHE is, and how she came up, I will tell you, and will not hide mysteries from you: but will seek her out from the beginning of her nativity, and bring the knowledge of her into light, and will not pass over the truth. * * Wherefore I prayed, and understanding was given me: I called upon God, and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me. I preferred HER before sceptres and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison with her. Neither compared I unto her any precious stone, because all gold in respect of her is as a little sand, and silver shall be counted as clay before her. I loved HER above health and beauty, and choose to have her instead of light: for the light that cometh from HER never goeth out. All good things together came to me with her, and innumerable riches in her hands. And I rejoiced in them all, because wisdom goeth before them: and I knew not that she was the Mother of them. I learned diligently, and do communicate her liberally: I do not hide her riches. For she is a treasure unto men that never faileth: which they that use become the friends of God, being commended for the gifts that come from learning. * * For wisdom, which is the worker of all things,* taught me: For in HER is an understanding Spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtle, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted [or, hindered], ready to do good, kind to man, stedfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtle Spirits. For wisdom is more moving than any motion: SHE passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For SHE is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For SHE is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness. And being but One, SHE can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets. For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. For SHE is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it. * * Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily; and sweetly doth she order all things. I loved HER, and sought her out from my youth, I desired to make her my spouse, and I was a lover of her beauty. In that she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her nobility: yea the Lord of all things himself loved her. For she is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of his works. If riches be a possession to be desired in this life; what is richer than wisdom, that worketh all things? And if prudence work; who of all that are is a more cunning workman than she? And if a man love righteousness, her labours are virtues: for SHE teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude: which are such things, as men can have nothing more profitable in their life. If a man desire much experience, she knoweth things of old, and conjectureth aright what is to come: SHE knoweth the subtleties of speeches, and can expound dark sentences: she foreseeth signs and wonders, and the events of seasons and times. *Therefore I purposed to take her to me to live with me*, knowing that she would be a counsellor of good things, and a comfort in cares and grief. * * Now when I considered these things in myself, and pondered them in my heart, how that to be allied unto wisdom is immortality; and great pleasure it is to have her friendship; and in the works of her hands are infinite riches; and in the exercise of conference with her prudence; and in talking with her, a good report; I went about *seeking how to take her to me.* * * Nevertheless, when I perceived that I could not otherwise obtain her, except GOD gave her me; and that was a point of wisdom also to know whose gift she was; I prayed unto the LORD, and besought him, and with my whole heart I said:

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* And without him was not any thing made that was made (John i. 3).

O GOD of my fathers, and LORD of mercy, who hast made all things with thy word * * Give me wisdom, that sitteth by thy throne; and reject me not from among thy children. * * O send HER out of thy holy heavens, and from the throne of thy glory, that being present SHE may labour with me, that I may know what is pleasing unto thee. For SHE knoweth and understandeth all things, and she shall lead me soberly in my doings, and preserve me in her power. [And this strain continues through several chapters, and is resumed in Ecclesiasticus.]

All wisdom cometh from the LORD and is with him forever. * * Wisdom hath been created before all things, and the understanding of prudence from everlasting. The Word of GOD most high is the fountain of wisdom; and HER ways are everlasting commandments. * * The parables of knowledge are in the treasures of wisdom: but godliness is an abomination to a sinner. *If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the* LORD *shall give her unto thee.* * * Wisdom exalteth her children, and layeth hold of them that seek her. He that loveth HER loveth life;

and they that seek her early shall be filled with joy. He that holdeth her fast shall inherit glory; and wheresoever she entereth, the LORD will bless. They that serve her shall minister to the Holy One: and them that love her the LORD doth love. Whoso giveth ear unto HER shall judge the nations: and he that attendeth unto her shall dwell securely. If a man commit himself unto HER, he shall inherit her; and his generation shall hold her in possession. For at the first she will walk with him by crooked ways [that is, SHE will cross him, whenever he crosses HER], and bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline, until she may trust his soul, and try him by her laws. Then will she return the straight way unto him, and comfort him, and shew him her secrets. But if he go wrong [if he is false to her], she will forsake him, and give him over to his own ruin. Observe the opportunity, and beware of [doing] evil; and be not ashamed when it concerneth thy soul. For there is a shame that bringeth sin; and there is a shame which is glory and grace. * * In no wise speak against the truth; but be abashed of the error of thine ignorance. * * Strive for the truth unto death, and the LORD shall fight for thee. * * My son, if thou wilt, thou shalt be taught: and if thou wilt apply thy mind, thou shalt be prudent. If thou love to hear, thou shalt receive understanding: and if thou bow thine ear, thou shalt be wise. Stand in the multitude of the elders; and cleave unto him that is wise. Be willing to hear every godly discourse; and let not the parables of understanding escape thee. And if thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy foot wear the steps of his door. Let thy mind be upon the ordinances of the LORD, and meditate continually in his commandments: he shall establish thine heart, and give thee wisdom at thine own desire. * *

Blessed is the man that doth meditate good things in wisdom, and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding. He that considereth HER ways in his heart shall also have understanding in her secrets. Go after HER as one that traceth, and lie in wait in her ways. He that prieth in at her windows shall also hearken at her doors. He that doth lodge near her house, shall also fasten a pin in her walls. * * He that feareth the LORD will do good; and HE THAT HATH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW SHALL OBTAIN HER. AND AS A MOTHER SHALL SHE MEET HIM, AND RECEIVE HIM AS A WIFE MARRIED OF A VIRGIN. With the bread of understanding shall she feed him, and give him the water of wisdom to drink. He shall be stayed upon her, and shall not be moved; and shall rely upon her, and shall not be confounded. * * But foolish men shall not attain unto her, and sinners shall not see her.

* * He that keepeth the LAW of the LORD getteth the understanding thereof: and the perfection of the fear of the LORD is wisdom.

* * Wisdom shall praise herself, and shall glory in the midst of her people. In the congregation of the Most High shall SHE open her mouth, and triumph

before his power.—I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a cloud. I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar. I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, and walked in the bottom of the deep. In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession. With all these I sought rest: and in whose inheritance shall I abide? So the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and he that made me caused my tabernacle to rest, and said, Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel. He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail. In the holy tabernacle I served before him; and so was I established in Zion. Likewise in the beloved city he gave me rest, and in Jerusalem was my power. And I took root in an honourable people, even in the portion of the LORD's inheritance. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress tree upon the mountains of Hermon. I was exalted like a palm tree in En-gaddi, and as a rose plant in Jericho, as a fair olive tree in a pleasant field, and grew up as a plane tree by the water. I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon and aspalathus, and I yielded a pleasant odour like the best myrrh, as galbanum, and onyx, and sweet storax, and as the fume of frankincense in the tabernacle. As the turpentine tree I stretched out my branches, and my branches are the branches of honour and grace. As the vine brought I forth pleasant savour, and my flowers are the fruit of honour and riches. I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge and holy hope: I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him. Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits. For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honey comb. They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty. He that obeyeth me shall never be confounded, and they that work by me shall not do amiss. *All these things are the book of the covenant of the most high God, even the Law which Moses commanded for an heritage unto the congregations of Jacob.* Faint not to be strong in the LORD; that he may confirm you, cleave unto him: for the LORD Almighty is GOD alone, and beside him there is no other SAVIOUR. He filleth all things with his wisdom, as Phison and Tigris in the time of the new fruits. He maketh the understanding to abound like Euphrates, and as Jordan in the time of the harvest. He maketh the doctrine of knowledge [that is, the Law] appear as the Light, and as Geon in the time of vintage. The first man knew HER not perfectly: no more shall the last find HER out [perfectly]. For her thoughts are more than the sea, and her counsels profounder than the great deep. I also came out as a brook from a river, and as a conduit into a garden. I said, I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed: and, lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea. I will yet make doctrine to shine as the morning, and will send forth her light afar off.

* * Jesus, the son of Sirach of Jerusalem, hath written in this book the instruction of understanding and knowledge, who out of his heart poured forth wisdom. Blessed is he that shall be exercised in these things; and he that layeth them up in his heart shall become wise. For if he do them, he shall be strong to all things: for the Light of the LORD leadeth him, who giveth wisdom to the godly. Blessed be the LORD for ever. Amen, Amen.

[The prayer of Jesus, the son of Sirach, concludes the book of Ecclesiasticus, in which he pours out his soul in thanks to GOD, and repeats]:

When I was yet young, or ever I went abroad, I desired Wisdom openly in my prayer. I prayed for HER before the temple, and will seek HER out even to the end. Even from the flower till the grape was ripe hath my heart delighted in HER: my foot went the right way, from my youth up sought I after HER. I bowed mine ear a little, and received her, and got much learning. I profited therein, therefore will I ascribe the glory unto him that giveth me wisdom. For I purposed to do after her, and earnestly I followed that which is good; so shall I not be confounded. My soul hath wrestled with HER, and in my doings I was exact [just]: I stretched my hands to heaven above, and bewailed my ignorance of HER. I directed my soul unto Her, and I found Her in pureness: I have had my heart joined with Her from the beginning, therefore shall I not be forsaken. My heart was troubled in seeking Her: therefore have I gotten a good possession. The LORD hath given me a tongue for my reward, and I will praise him therewith. Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and dwell in the house of learning. Wherefore are ye slow, and what say ye of these things, seeing your souls are very thirsty? I opened my mouth, and said, Buy HER for yourselves without money. Put your neck under the yoke, and let your soul receive instruction: SHE is hard at hand to find.

Some apology may seem to be necessary for reciting so large a portion of the sacred book, when every Christian is supposed not only to have the inspired volume at hand, but to be familiar with its contents; but it is important to bring clearly before the reader the fact, that the Jew saw *something*, as taught in the Divine Law, which he valued before riches, and before honors, and before the glories of the world; something he prized beyond the power of words to express. That *something* had many names. It was called Life, Eternal Life: it was called the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and it was called Zion, the Jerusalem above, &c.: and, as we have just shown, it was called WISDOM and was personified in the feminine gender and compared to a Mother received as of a Virgin. This is the Virgin Mother of the New Testament, whose true Son is Wisdom itself, the eternal Word.

In reference to this mysterious SOMETHING, we ought to understand that the expressions the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin Mother, are all metaphorical. They do not, any of them, nor all of them together, give a student, or a seeker after the truth, any direct image of the true subject. They must be understood as forms of expression resorted to for the purpose of remotely shadowing out a divine something which has no adequate representation in those portions of visible nature which fall under the nomenclature of man. Let the student ponder the command:

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

When the *spirit* of this command is duly apprehended, the student is prepared to recognize the *spirit* of the mysterious drama which represents the passage of a disciple of the Hebrew sacred Law to the "place," the Holy Land, prepared by GOD for the faithful,—the Holy Land being the Virgin Mother of the SONS of GOD.

The disciple, having received the Holy Mother to his *own heart*, is now born of the Spirit, illustrating the true sense of the teaching to Nicodemus: he has been born again; exhibiting the "mystery" referred to by St. Paul (Ephes. v. 32).

The child of nature carries henceforth his own Mother in his own bosom. Henceforth he lives obediently to HER, whose ways are everlasting commandments: and this is to obey GOD.

Man is never less free than when he is in the execution of what he imagines a free arbitrary will of his own; and is never more free than when he consciously follows or obeys the laws of nature, which express the course of GOD's providence in the world. To receive this principle to one's heart is to take the Virgin Mother of the Holy Spirit to one's "own home."

Here we are emphatically reminded of chapter i. verse 12,—But as many as received him [as many as received and obeyed the Law], to them gave [he] power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his name. The loved disciple, in receiving the Holy Mother to his heart, has become one of the sons of GOD,—of which the representation in the gospel is a symbol for all time, and not a mere history of an isolated event in the past.

In this scene, also, we see the disciple dying with CHRIST; for, although the disciple is described as at the foot of the cross, he is not the less mystically upon the cross, submitting his nature principles, the "first born of Egypt," to be *smitten* by the power of GOD (Exodus xii. 29)—a necessary step in this work, according to St. Paul; for this is what the Apostle calls the death of the "old man" (Rom. vi. 6), applying it to himself in Gal. ii. 20,—"I am crucified with CHRIST."

In many mystical writings of the middle ages, the Church takes the place of the Law, as the latter was regarded among the Jews; but the result is the same, or was designed to be so: for the Law represents the bridegroom, and the Church the bride. The mysterious child is the Spirit: the Son, as respects the Law; but, as respects the Church, the child is faith, the daughter of the Church: and yet the Spirit is the same. We see in John, that the Father passes away at the moment when the disciple takes his place among the Sons of GOD. In like manner, the mystical writers describe the *Mother* as "killing herself to bring her child to life,"—the meaning of which is, that the Church is only instrumental in the work of faith, and when this work is "accomplished," with respect to a disciple, the Church mystically passes from the visible to the invisible, and the former is said to die,—its life having passed to the disciple. This, seen in the Law, is to see the Son of man ascend up where he was before (John vi. 62): and this means, that the Law is seen to have proceeded from the higher nature of man, and is regarded as divine.

To see something of this in the present age, let it be supposed that the Bible, as a divine book, originated in a Divine Spirit which pervades the volume. This Spirit, as the Word, preceded the Bible as a writing; and, regarded on that side, so to speak, may be called the Father. But this Spirit, when communicated to a disciple, is relatively the Son, and is of one and the same nature with the Father.

If the Church be interposed, as between the Father and the Son, the Spirit must be seen to be the same; because the Church itself is of one and the same nature as the Father, whether She is regarded as having her existence from the Bible, as with the Protestants, or, as having an anterior existence to the writings, which, as productions in time, are referred to the Church, according to the Catholic doctrine,—as advocated by some, who regard the Church as the virgin mother.

If the student enters into the true sense of these statements, he will perceive but one and the same Spirit in both the Bible and the Church; yet not as they are visible: for, the Bible, as a Letter, shadows the Spirit; and, in like manner, the Church, in its external form, shadows the same Spirit. Hence, so long as we look merely to the Letter of the one, or to the forms of the other, we do not recognize the Spirit of either.

By this mode of interpretation we can see, as it were, the inside of the scene we are considering, and it will then no longer be considered historical but symbolical; and we may see at the same time that it is infinitely more important than any mere history can be.

That this union of the Spirit of the loved disciple, with the Spirit of the Church, is the end, or object of the teaching, we may see by the language of the next, the 28th verse, to wit:

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, &c.

That is, the "end of the Law" has been *accomplished*, by bringing the loved disciple into unity with the Father through the mystical marriage.

This has *saved* the disciple; and it may be considered a symbol, as it is recorded, for the salvation of all who follow Jesus, by abiding in the vine.

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

We have already shown that this, and many similar passages, are said by Christ, as the Law personified, speaking in its Spirit. The writer of the gospel, speaking of the Word, says (ch. i. 4), In him was life,—that is, the Law taught the way of life; and in the Law the Jew thought he "had eternal life," this being the Spirit of the Law. This Spirit we have seen indicated by the Lamb and the Dove; and we have seen the same Spirit entering Jerusalem upon the emblem of humility.

But now, although we have read the record of John, that all things were accomplished, there remains yet one lesson more to be taught.

Christ, we have said, is a figure of the Law; and the Law being figured by man, he presents also the type of man.

It remains to be shown, therefore, that, notwithstanding the man is saved, by the mystical marriage which has "accomplished" the end of the Law, there is yet one *bitter* cup to *taste*, which no child of Adam escapes.

This is shown by the sponge, filled with the symbolic vinegar, and placed upon hyssop the bitterest of herbs, which is applied to the *mouth* of Jesus: and then it is, that he utters the words, It is finished; and gives up the ghost.

Even this closing scene is represented, with strict regard to symbolical propriety, as having taken place at such a time as to be followed by the Sabbath, a figure of the Rest into which the righteous man has passed.

The three hours' darkness, recorded by the other gospel writers as following the crucifixion, is an allusion to the three days' darkness in the older story, to show that CHRIST is the image of the Law ; just as his forty days' temptation is an image of the forty years in the wilderness in the older drama.

We may remark here, that the crown of thorns is simply a representation of the trials of life, to which MAN, the so-called lord of creation, is subjected in his pilgrimage through the wilderness of the world.

The allusion to the passover, in verse 14, as we have said, has its special signification, being a reference to the original institution which pointed to this very end, not as prophetic of a given historical scene, to transpire at some future time, but as the symbolism of a scene through which we all pass.

SECTION VI.

We have repeatedly had occasion to say, that a symbol may have more than one meaning. In the 12th Section of Part First of this work, we interpreted the scene on Mount Calvary as designed for several purposes, one of them being an exhibition of the death of the Spirit of the Law through the priests and Pharisees, who, by their traditions, had made the Law "of none effect." We also there touched upon its import as signifying the death of man; and here we see this significance of the scene still more clearly.

In this scene there are some subordinate features, about the meaning of which there may be differences of opinion, without disturbing the results already indicated. One of these refers to the women who are more or less conspicuous in all four of the accounts, though variously numbered and named, each writer possibly having some special design, in harmony, no doubt, with the general doctrine of the brotherhood.

We see at the foot of the cross, according to John, three women, who are described as the mother of

JESUS, his mother's sister [Mary, the wife of Cleophas], and Mary Magdalene.

The other three gospel writers place the women, diversely named, "afar off;" which may disturb a literalist, but can give no uneasiness from the point of view taken in this work.

In symbolism, women represent usually the *nature* side of life; and in death these principles may appropriately be represented as present—these nature principles being indeed the very subject of change, the spirit side of nature being unchangeable.

The gospel writers, beyond all question, saw in man not merely a double, but a triple nature. It is hinted at in the *three* measures of meal in which the leaven is said to have been placed. We may see the same three in Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary; but this doctrine is more especially indicated by the three figures on the cross, which represent but one man, of Body, Soul, and Spirit, the Spirit being in the *midst*, between the so-called thieves; and they are so called because they tyrannize over the lamb and dove. In the older drama, the triune nature of man is indicated in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and this is the reason why Isaac is said to prefigure CHRIST.

The same doctrine is intimated by John in the three women at the foot of the cross; one of whom represents the Spirit, the mother of CHRIST, as being the same Spirit; while Mary Magdalene, who had sinned, figures the Body, from which the devilish passions had been cast out by the Spirit of Truth.

The opinion of John is further indicated by his representing two angels, as seen in the sepulchre, seated, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of JESUS had lain—intimating that the Spirit had risen, but not the other two principles; though these he calls angels, to indicate their purification in death.

If the other writers differ from this, though Mark also speaks of *two* men in shining garments, as seen in the sepulchre, the divergence must be explained by the literalist, who insists upon the historical verity of the accounts. To the author this divergence is of no importance, except to show that the gospels are not historical.

Commentators usually refer the language of CHRIST on the cross, Woman, behold thy Son; and, addressing the loved disciple, Behold thy Mother, as simply historical. They refer to it as showing a filial concern, on the part of JESUS, that his mother should be placed under the care of a particular disciple, who was thus designated as her protector, and as one who would thereafter attend to her wants and comforts.

But if this was the purpose, we might naturally suppose it would have been expressed more definitely, in some form of a request, a command, or a desire, and not simply by the mysterious language, Behold, &c.; for the disciple and the Mother, from the literal point of view, must have already been well known to each other. Besides, we must suppose there was some special significance in the language by which the Mother of CHRIST is designated as the MOTHER of the *disciple*, and the *disciple* as the SON.

We must bear in mind, also, that there could have been no necessity for thus providing a protector for the Mother of Jesus, whose husband might still have been living, since we hear nothing of his death; and even if Joseph had died, Mary, according to the history, had several children, both sons and daughters, some of whom must have been living. Matthew names four sons of Joseph, as the brethren of Jesus, and speaks of his sisters in the plural (ch. xiii. 55, 56). We cannot suppose, therefore, that there was the least necessity for the language of Christ, as usually interpreted, and we must understand it in some other sense.

We repeat, therefore, that the scene is symbolical, and that it signifies the union of the disciple to the Church. It exhibits the mystical marriage, described by St. Paul as a "great mystery;" and most certainly it is a great mystery—no other than a living sense of "the unity of the soul with the whole of nature,"—the Spirit of the Law, the Spirit of the Church, and the Spirit of Nature, being one and the same.

As mere history, the scene at the foot of the cross, although affecting in the highest degree, cannot be considered as profoundly important. That the "loved disciple" should accept as a sacred charge the care of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, might be an interesting fact, regarded as historical; but the exhibition rises immeasurably in importance when its true import is realized.

Let us remember that St. Paul constituted himself a minister to the Gentiles, and claimed in their behalf that there was "no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Rom. x. 12); the entire spirit of this Epistle tending to assert the privileges of the Gentiles in common with those of the Jews, provided they called upon the Lord; and the apostle urged that, even in the absence of preaching, if they did by nature the things contained in the Law, they would not be condemned, but would be judged by the Spirit, and not by the Law. It was St. Paul, also, who set forth the great principle that God hath made all nations of men of one blood.

We see also that Peter, in the 10th chapter of the Acts, asserts that the Holy Ghost had manifested itself among the Gentiles; although this is attributed to the *Word* which he preached among them.

Here we have the authority of Scripture, that the Holy Ghost may appear among the Gentiles. If preaching is claimed to be a necessary preparative for it, according to St. Paul or St. Peter, this can only be true of the written Word; and we are at liberty to recognize the independence of the Spirit, according to the doctrine of John.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

To be born of the Spirit is to be born of the Holy Ghost; and here its independence is set forth absolutely.

We may understand, then, even from Scripture itself, that the Holy Ghost may be manifested among the Gentiles; and, if so, we may acknowledge also, as among them, though not in the *external* Jewish sense, the co-ordinate elements of the sacred Trinity, and perceive among "all nations" not only the Holy Ghost, but the Father and the Son; and further than this, we may expect to discover among them, no less, the mysterious Mother.

If we insist upon the relation of Father and Son, how can we dispense with that feminine existence which this relation supposes, or rather necessitates?

But it is said that the Father and Son are of one nature, and are not to be understood in a human sense. Let this be admitted; and then we say that the Mother is a mysterious Being also, and is not to be understood in a human sense.

If the Father and Son are mysterious Beings, we cannot escape a confusion of ideas, if we interpose between them a mortal woman, a daughter of Eve.

Who, then, is this Virgin Mother of a Son who is one with the Father?

St. Paul clearly refers to her in Galatians iv. 26, where he tells us of that Jerusalem which is above, and "the mother of us all."

We cannot suppose that the Mother of us all, as referred to by the Apostle, is any other than the mother of Jesus, whom Jesus himself calls the mother of the loved disciple. We do not find in St. Paul's epistles any authority for supposing that the Apostle ever alluded to the Mysterious Mother, as a mortal being, and the wife of Joseph.

Mary is a Mother in an infinitely higher sense than this, and in this higher sense she was known among the Gentiles, no less than was the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost was known among them, according to the testimony of both St. Paul and St. Peter. In this higher sense we have, all of us, need to receive her to our "own home," as we see it expressed in John; and until we do so, we have, truly, no proper home, but are precisely in the condition of Ulysses during his mysterious wanderings before he, also, returned to his "own home," and was re-united to one from whom he had separated twenty years before.

Let the truth be stated: the Virgin Mother of the Son of God is symbolized in the gospels by a woman—as she has been in a multitude of other writings, both before and after the gospels were written. She is the Isis of Egypt; and was known among the Gentiles by a multitude of names; so many, indeed, that she has been called the Myrionymous. She is the Venus, born from the Sea, the Sea itself (the Latin *Mare*) being an emblem of her. She is the changeable side of the unchangeable, and has in all ages been figured by the Moon, the chaste Diana.

Few things are more remarkable in the Old Testament than the manner in which WISDOM is referred to in the feminine gender; and when the attention is once turned upon the subject, it requires but little study to perceive that Wisdom is there put for the Virgin Mother, " whose ways are everlasting commandments ; " or, we may say, that the Virgin Mother of the New Testament is the Wisdom of the Old Testament.

We have no wish to make a direct comparison between the wanderings of Ulysses and those of the children of Israel, and yet nothing is more certain than that the two histories have a common object, and no student can be entirely at " home " who does not recognize it. One is a Grecian and the other a Jewish story ; and we, gentiles of another age and nation, are perfectly at liberty to choose between them ; or, by accepting both, find each throwing light upon the other, and both serving to illustrate the common nature shared by all nations—all nations being, in the judgment of St. Paul, of one blood.

When the mysterious mother becomes known, we shall have no difficulty in perceiving her in the multiform modes by which she has been exhibited in mystical writings in all ages. She is a very Proteus in ancient writings, endowed with a certain " *Omniformity*," by which, in the very same story, she may be seen in a great variety of characters, or symbols.

She was the true Diana of those who knew this goddess. She was also the true Arcadia of those who knew this blessed country, which had no geographical locality. She was the true garden of Hesperides : and was the very fountain of Arethusa, by the side of which so many exquisite idylls have been composed.

She presides over the adventures of Ulysses in his wanderings, and yet is the Penelope to bless him in the end: and it is a most suggestive fact, that Ulysses does not go to his father until after his reunion with his wife; and equally suggestive, that his father is *alone* when the son goes to him, and that he goes to him *alone*.

The Virgin Mother has her appropriate place in the Grecian romance of Theagenes and Cheraclea; which is a pure Hermetic tale—not written by a Bishop, as tradition reports, but by one who claims to have been "of the race of the Sun," his assumed name clearly pointing out his character: Heliodorus, son of Theodosius. This name was not idly chosen, and sufficiently indicates the mystical affinity of the author of the romance with the reputed author of the Smaragdine Table, which professes to disclose, though in symbolism, the complete and perfect doctrine of what is called the "Solar work." Every one knows the ordinary meaning of Helios and Theos; but they have always had a mystic sense besides—the common property of an esoteric school.

The author need not be reminded that all of these representations may not consciously have been founded upon one only idea conceived in precisely the same manner; and yet nothing is more certain than that they all have a common root.

The same Mother appears conspicuously in the writings of Dante. It is through her that the poet was led to the extraordinary vision described in the

31st Canto of Purgatory,—a vision of the mysterious Mother herself:

As they spake,
A thousand fervent wishes riveted
Mine eyes upon her beaming eyes, that stood
Still fixed towards the gryphon, motionless.
As the sun strikes a mirror, even thus,
Within these orbs, the twyfold being shone;
Forever varying, in one figure now
Reflected, now in other. Reader! muse
How wondrous in my sight it seem'd, to mark
A thing, albeit steadfast in itself,
Yet, in its imaged semblance, mutable.

This mysterious Mother and Virgin is One, yet Two; in one sense "steadfast," and yet in another, "mutable;" and the poet figures the "imaged semblance" by an imaginary animal, which he calls a *Gryphon.*

Even thus is she recognized by the "one consummate artist of his age," who closes his great poem in the higher regions, by a

CHORUS MYSTICUS.

All that doth pass away
Is but a symbol;
The insufficient, here
Grows to existence;
The indescribable,
Here is it done;
The *ever feminine*
Draweth us on.

Bernay's Translation.

Or, as rendered by Bell:

All is of this earth's sphere
  Seeming alone;
The insufficient, here
  Being has grown;
The indescribable,
  Here is it done;
The *Virgin Eternal*
  Leadeth us on.

The same mysterious Being plays a multitude of parts in Meister's Travels, by the same unequalled writer of modern times. She is the "Widow" of the 12th chapter (Carlyle's translation). She is the very "Halls" she walks in; and, "if she was beautiful while moving under the blaze of the lustres, she was infinitely more so when illuminated by the soft gleam of the lamp."

Let the reader of the Travels understand what lamp is here spoken of, and he will come very near holding the "key" of a certain mysterious casket, which was found in a certain *breast* pocket (ch. xviii.).

This same mysterious Lady, is the "Lago," of the 13th chapter, which was crossed and recrossed, but *neither end of which was seen:* and in this lake, we see her, rocking herself, "plashing to and fro among the waters, *in a fastened boat;*"—a point which has its special signification.

This same Lady is the Marchese's palace, whose "owner" was "absent;" or, in other words, invisible.

She is, again, the "large hall," of the 14th chapter, "beautifully lighted from above,"—where we see busy artists, "sitting and standing, each occupied in his own way: the painter at his easel, the drawer at his sketch-board," &c., copying a "strangely intertwisted piece of art," a wonderful *model.* Among the artists seated around this "model" and busily occupied with it, we see how the author points out a class of students in search of the origin, the beginning, the foundation of nature,—here figured as "architects engaged in planning the *pedestal* [of the model], on which a similar group, when wrought in marble, was to be erected." We soon meet with a decided intimation of the author's opinion—whose vision encircled the artists themselves, as a part of the model itself: for he proceeds to say, that, "One man only had repeated the whole group in a miniature scale; and in certain movements and arrangements of limbs he really seemed to have surpassed his model:" and then it came out, says the author,—and this means that it was discovered,—that *this man was the maker of the model.*

Here the curious reader may see the One, Two, of Pythagoras; the one making the two, which is the *image* of the One, here called a "model." Towards the close of the chapter, both the one and the two are exhibited in another form, where we read:—"At last I gained the topmost summit; a cliff, the peak of which afforded room only for *a single person* [this is the maker of the model]; who, if he looked down from it into the horrid depth, might see furious mountain torrents foaming through the black abysses. * * But now my attention," continues the narrator, "fixed itself on some huge crags rising opposite me, precipitous like my own, yet offering on their summits a larger space of level." Here several persons were seen, mostly "Ladies," and among them "Natalia herself:" and then we read,—"The danger of such an unexpected interview increased every moment: but it grew boundless, when a perspective came before my eyes, and *brought me over to her and her over to me.*"

Let the reader enter into the Spirit of this representation and he will see how the author designed to teach that the one and the two are but one essentially, a vision of which induces the remark: "There is something magical at all times in perspectives. Were we not accustomed from youth to look through them, we should shudder and tremble every time we put them to our eyes. *It is we who are looking, and it is not we; a being it is whose organs are raised to a higher pitch, whose limitations are done away, who has become entitled to stretch forth into the infinite.*" *

The student need not imagine that, because of the variety in the forms of presenting the subject, he is to understand that the mutability of nature is designed to be taught. On the contrary, he is called upon to perceive the *steadfast* in the illusory forms of presentation, and must understand that nature's ways, like those of Wisdom, are everlasting commandments (Ecclus. i. 5).

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* Those who are willing to study as well as read, can hardly find a modern book more worthy their attention than the TRAVELS of Wilhelm Meister. It has no necessary connection with the Apprenticeship, or may be profitably read apart from it.

The story of the Golden Ass, by Apuleius, is another of the many imitations, if we choose to call them so, of the wanderings of the children of Israel.

Lucius, the name indicating light, *falls* from his duty, and is transformed into an ass: in which form he is subjected to all sorts of humiliations and degradations: but at length, in a dream, he has a vision of the Virgin Mother, in the form of the Egyptian Isis, through whom he is instructed how he may be reinstated; and he is warned to "remember that the remaining course of his life must be dedicated to the goddess, even to the boundaries of his last breath. Nor is it unjust (she adds), that you should owe your whole life to that goddess, by whose assistance you will return to your human form."

If we read this story of the Golden Ass, not merely as an ancient, and most absurd romance—taken literally—but as an exposition of ancient opinion on a point of theology, we shall find the substance of it expressed in this requirement of obedience to the goddess Isis; and we must then determine, if we would understand the teaching, the character of the goddess: we must learn who or what she represents.

The general reader may see no parallel to this teaching in Scripture, but let him study the import of the scene at the foot of the cross in connection with the character and attributes of Wisdom as figuratively set forth in passages like the following, and he may discover a common principle at the root of all this teaching.

Bearing in mind what John says of the Word [Wisdom] as with God "in the beginning," we read in the Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach:

All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever.

* * The Word of God most high is the fountain of Wisdom; and her ways are everlasting commandments.

Whilst the first verse speaks of wisdom as eternal —as with God for ever,—and the 5th (of the 1st chapter) tells us that her ways are everlasting commandments—of course without a beginning in time,— still, the 4th verse refers to wisdom as "created before all things." But this need not embarrass the student. The wisdom here spoken of, is the eternal wisdom of God, by which the heavens were made, and all of God's works (Ps. cxxxvi. 5, and civ. 24).

In this character, Wisdom is the Word. But this is also the Spirit, of whom it is said, There is one wise and greatly to be feared, the Lord sitting upon his throne.

This is the Father: but the same wisdom is immediately treated as the Virgin Mother,—the mother of her own spirit, although said to be created by "the one wise"—"sitting upon his throne."

This is metaphorical language, and we must look beyond it to apprehend the meaning.

Let us repeat the 4th verse—The Word of GOD most high is the fountain of wisdom; and *her* ways, HER ways,—let the reader dwell upon this expression, —*her ways are everlasting commandments.*

What commandments are these, and how are they to be discovered, and authenticated? Let us read:

* * Blessed is the man that doth meditate good things in wisdom, and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding.

He that considereth *her* ways in his heart shall also have understanding in *her* secrets.

Go after *her* as one that traceth, and lie in wait in *her* ways.

He that prieth in at *her* windows shall also hearken at *her* doors.

He that doth lodge near *her* house shall also fasten a pin in *her* walls.

* * He that feareth the LORD will do good; and he that hath the knowledge of the Law shall obtain *her*. [This was the Law of Moses, for the Jew knew no other. And now, let us note what follows. After telling us that he that hath the knowledge of the Law shall obtain wisdom, we read]:

And as a mother shall she meet him [at the foot of the cross?], and receive him as a wife married of a virgin [can we suppose this any other than the virgin mother? and, now, for the fruits of the mystical marriage]:

With the bread of understanding shall she feed him, and give him the water [that is, the Spirit] of wisdom to drink.

He shall be stayed upon her, and shall not be moved; and shall rely upon her, and shall not be confounded.

She shall exalt him above his neighbours, and in the midst of the congregation shall she open his mouth.

He shall find joy and a crown of gladness, and she shall cause him to inherit an everlasting name.

But foolish men shall not attain unto her, and sinners shall not see her.

For she is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her. [But]

* * * If thou followest righteousness [here Wisdom is called righteousness], thou shalt obtain her, and put her on, as a glorious long robe.

The birds will resort unto their like; so will Truth [righteousness, wisdom] return unto them that practise in her.

If the student will weigh these and similar passages, and not be deluded by metaphorical language, he will see that Wisdom, the Word, the Law [in its Spirit], the Lord, righteousness, the Lamb and the Dove, all point to one thing, whose "ways are everlasting commandments;"—and this is the Virgin Mother.

* * She is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her.

For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of GOD, and the image of his goodness.

And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of GOD and prophets (Wisdom vii.).

Before leaving this point the author desires to say that, although many of the monkish tales in the Gesta Romanorum are extremely crude, and simple even to childishness, there are others, again, conceived in the highest spirit of symbolism; and the study of them, he does not hesitate to say, will throw light even upon the gospels themselves, which are the purest examples of symbolical writing in the world.

It may be supposed that the very few indications of the character of Mary, as given in the gospels, are altogether insufficient to warrant the opinion expressed in this work of the Virgin Mother. She scarcely appears at all on the stage, and no especial details are recorded calculated, in an external sense, to throw light upon her character.

But here, as elsewhere, the author recognizes the perfection of the gospel as a work of art, rising, as it were, into the supernatural.

The Mother is exhibited to us by two extremes, which include within themselves all possible intermediates, all the more truly shadowed out by the very absence of details, which could only mar the totality of the picture.

The mysterious Virgin is represented as the Mother of the Son of GOD, who is one with the Father. Let this be first observed. We then see her pointed out by the Son himself—than which nothing could be more appropriate—as the Mother of the loved disciple; for while the Mother begets the Son, it is the Son who makes the Mother known.

The author attaches so much importance to the declaration in Ecclesiasticus (i. 5),—that, wisdom's ways are everlasting commandments,—that he will here refer to Ecclesiastes (iii. 14) for a parallel to it,—I know that whatsoever GOD doeth, it shall be for ever,—referred directly to GOD in Ecclesiasticus xlii. 21. When we say that GOD "doeth" any thing, it must not be understood in reference to any *particular* thing, as if, GOD having done a particular thing, that thing remains unalterable "for ever." GOD does nothing in this sense; but what he does, he always does. In other words, GOD is forever doing; and his doings, like wisdom's ways, are everlasting commandments.

It may be said with great safety that all writers on both philosophy and divinity, worthy of note, agree in representing the beatitude of man under some notion of his union with GOD. This is expressed in every conceivable form, and often in language so apparently opposite in sense, that, upon a hasty reading, the writers seem to be entirely at variance with each other; when, nevertheless, it only requires a little examination into the meaning of words, employed perhaps in different senses, to perceive that the writers mean the same thing.

One cause of the apparent diversity arises from the fact, that many earnest seekers of the Truth have reached a sense of it through channels which seem to them peculiar. They then contemplate the result through that seeming peculiarity; and thus honestly imagine themselves in possession of a new truth, when, nevertheless, it is but the very same truth reached by their neighbor through another channel.

It is as if some vegetable, if endowed with sense, should imagine itself diverse *substantially*, by judging itself, not according to its own nature, but according to the soil in which it found means of growth.

Therefore, let us have the charity to say, that the faith of the ancient Essene, attained through the Law, "exalted" in his estimation as divine, may have been the very same faith which is now reached, either through the Bible itself, or the New Testament as a part of it, or through the several denominations existing as so many churches among modern Christians.

The author has seen too many evidences of the truth of this, during a long life, to leave any doubt on his own mind as to the fact, while his theory also requires him to give full credit to it; and yet he thinks the results are not due to any forms of faith, as such.

When philosophers contend for the doctrine of the unity of GOD, they commonly mean to express an opinion which must be understood as a sense of universal harmony; to recognize which has, in all ages, been supposed the proper end of teaching. This harmony the Pythagoreans called "the music of the spheres;" and Pythagoras was said to have *heard* it, in precisely the same sense in which this word is often used in Scripture. Pythagoras *heard*, that is, he *understood* the universal harmony.

Many mystical writers in past ages have employed their lives in endeavoring to illustrate, what some call the life of GOD in the soul; and not a few of them have declared, that whoever is so happy as to receive this blessing, and fails to give the glory to GOD, shall lose it; though the possibility of falling from grace has been much discussed in the Church.

Many modern authors have written whole volumes to show how man may pass from nature to GOD; or, as some express it, how he may "bridge over" the gulf from the phenomenal to the noumenal or ontological.

The author ventures to say, that when any one assumes an absolute separation of the phenomenal from the noumenal, he will never discover the "bridge" by which to pass from one to the other. Whoever makes this assumption had better determine the prior problem, and show the grounds upon which he makes it.

If he cannot explain how a separation is possible, in the first instance, then, let him not assume it; for in this very assumption he creates an insoluble difficulty for himself.

The obscurity of the problem of Ontology, as handled by most writers, lies in a vicious assumption, or judgment "according to the flesh," that we are not in the noumenal while in the phenomenal, thus placing themselves voluntarily in the dark and then complaining that they cannot see; and they struggle in vain for a phenomenal passage to the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

To all such the author would commend the gospel of John as a study, and would particularly call their attention to the scene at the foot of the cross, in illustration, if they choose so to consider it, of a passage from nature to grace, the phenomenal to the noumenal —keeping in mind that the Mother and the Son are of one and the same nature.

We have a story current among us full of instruction upon this very subject, though but little understood, in which a sage is represented as addressing a student as follows,—reciting the history of a certain crucifix:

"Of this ivory CRUCIFIX I have had, for thirty years, the body with the head and feet in one place. For its own nature, as well as for the glorious art displayed in it, I kept the figure laid up in my most private drawer: nearly ten years ago I got [that is, he understood] the cross belonging to it, with the inscription; and was then induced to have the arms supplied by the best carver of our day. Far, indeed, was this expert artist from equalling his predecessor; yet I let his work pass, more for devout purposes, than for any admiration of its excellence.

"Now, conceive my delight! A little while ago the original, genuine arms were sent me, as you see them here united in the loveliest harmony; and I, charmed at so happy a coincidence, cannot help recognizing in this crucifix the fortunes of the Christian religion, which, often enough dismembered and scattered abroad, will ever in the end again gather itself together at the foot of the cross.

SECTION VII.

It may be asked, why neither of the first three gospels contain the words of Christ, to his mother and to the loved disciple, to which so much importance is here given. But this is a question for the literalists to answer, who look upon the gospels as veritable histories: and they should explain, at the same time, why neither Mark nor John give any account of a supernatural birth. They should explain, also, why John alone records the miracle of the raising of Lazarus; and why he alone refers to the seamless coat and many such peculiarities.

If the gospels were histories, it is admitted that no important feature in either should be omitted from the others; but we say they are not histories. They are mythical representations, each writer making use of such figures, parables, and mystical allusions as might best serve his own purpose of exhibiting a certain doctrine—the "leaven" of the Essenes, and not that of the Pharisees.

Upon the supposition that the gospels are histories we might be surprised at the many "variations" to be met with in the four accounts of the crucifixion.

Matthew says they "put on [Jesus] a scarlet robe." Mark and John tell us, that the robe was "purple;" Luke saying nothing of the color of the robe, nor of the robe itself; and Luke says nothing of the crown of thorns, referred to by the other three.

Matthew and Mark record the exclamation, Eloi, Eloi, &c.; but neither Luke nor John say any thing of it.

Of the four inscriptions, no two, in English, are alike: in Matthew, the inscription is, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews; in Mark, it is, The King of the Jews; in Luke, it is, This is the King of the Jews; in John, it reads, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Luke and John say, that the inscription was in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; neither Matthew nor Mark recording this.

If the original record varies in the four accounts, how far is such a variation to be tolerated in a veracious history? If the translations differ from the original, then, what protection have we against other and more vital errors, and what becomes of the dogma that we have an authentic Bible protected from error by the Holy Spirit? If it be said, finally, that the inscriptions are in spirit the same, and only differ in mere verbal variations, then, the author would observe that this expresses the principle, although on a minor point, which he has been endeavoring to apply in the interpretation of the whole gospel—that we should seek the *spirit* of the teaching, and not attach undue importance to the manner of representing it, which may vary not merely in words, but even in images, while the teaching remains the same, because the spirit is one and the same.

Of the four accounts of the two thieves, or malefactors, Luke alone records the saying of JESUS to one of them, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise—this one having rebuked the other for deriding JESUS; whereas, in the account by Matthew and by Mark, both of the thieves reviled him—John saying nothing of this.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the three hours' darkness; John saying nothing of it. This three hours' darkness is an evident allusion to the three days' darkness in Egypt.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke record that the veil of the temple was rent; John saying nothing of it. This is a symbol of the *rending* of the body in death, the body being the temple of the Holy Ghost.

The earthquake is recorded by Matthew, and by neither Mark, Luke, nor John. It has the same significance as the previous allusion.

The opening of the graves, and the appearance in the holy city of "many bodies of the saints which slept," is recorded by Matthew; and by neither of the other three. It expresses the opinion of Matthew, that, in the death of the righteous, there is a preternatural revival of blessed memories, called "saints."

Luke alone records the forgiveness, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. It expresses the opinion of Luke, that a perfect man should rise above the desire of vengeance upon his enemies, acting in ignorance—the opinion of Plato.

Luke is the only one that records the saying of JESUS—Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit: instead of which, John records the words—It is finished; neither Matthew nor Mark reciting any words as uttered at the corresponding moment; he is said by these two, to have cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke place the women "afar off," John describes them as at the cross, the accounts differing as to the number and names of the women, each writer intending, no doubt, to indicate something in respect to *nature* principles, represented by women, the true daughters of Isis, the mother of the universe; and, at the same time, let us say, the great mother of abominations, as referred to in the Revelation; for *she* may be either, according as she is seen from within or without. In the Spirit, nature is an eternal virgin; as seen without, she is the mother of all corruption.

Mark says that Joseph of Arimathea went "boldly" unto Pilate, and craved the body of JESUS; John says, that he went "secretly," giving, as a reason for it, his "fear of the Jews."

Matthew records that vinegar was offered mingled with gall [Mark says, with myrrh], before the crucifixion; and then, that vinegar was offered upon a reed while on the cross, as in Mark. Luke says nothing of the offering of gall or hyssop or myrrh, but says that vinegar was offered. John records that, "they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it upon hyssop,"—which was offered to Jesus after he had said, I thirst,—which he is represented as saying, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

This allusion to the Scriptures has induced commentators to search for the prophecy, and they have found a passage in the 69th Psalm, in which the Psalmist, in enumerating a long series of trials and sufferings inflicted upon him by his enemies makes use, indeed, of some of the words used in the gospel; but in no manner as a prophecy.

Verse 21. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

This is merely figurative language, by which the Psalmist describes the afflictions put upon him by his enemies; from whom he implores the protection of the Lord; and it is in no sense a prediction of what was to happen to the Lord himself, hundreds of years after.

If such merely figurative allusions can be caught up and transformed into prophecy by commentators upon Scripture, they should go further, and explain the prophetic sense of other passages found in connection with them: and then the harmonists will have enough to do. If the 21st verse, as above recited, is prophetic, what must be said of the verses in the same Psalm, in which the Psalmist implores vengeance upon his enemies?

Verse 24. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

25. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

Are these verses also prophetic; and do they breathe the spirit of him who prayed, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do? We must refer this language, on the contrary, to the Spirit which dictated the concluding verses of the otherwise beautiful 137th Psalm:

8. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

9. Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

Happily this is not the Spirit of *the Law and the prophets.* It is the outpouring of a human heart under affliction, carrying with it no mark of either inspiration or prophecy. We are not obliged to receive every thing in the sacred volume as of equal value and as equally expressing a divine character. The Letter is water, and we have a right to judge it by fire.

A dead theology may be served by a tenacious adherence to every part of the Letter; but pure religion and undefiled before GOD, can only be injured by such a superstition.

Many writers have pointed out what has seemed to them discrepancies in the four accounts, of what is said to have taken place at the *sepulchre:* and they are discrepancies, if the accounts are to be taken literally. The literalists claim, it is true, that the divergencies are only such as prove that the writers were not in collusion with each other for the deception of mankind. The latitude allowable in veracious histories, by different persons, extends however only to the statement of facts by one, omitted by another; but can in no manner be extended to statements irreconcilable with each other.

Upon the supposition of a myth, the differences in question are of no importance. The four Evangelists have, each of them, given mythical histories for the illustration of a certain doctrine, and were not required to exhibit the doctrine in precisely the same manner. They have not recited a history, and some allowance must be made for the individualities of the writers, while the doctrine suggested is one and the same, as given in all four of the accounts.

Among the variations chiefly dwelt upon by those who have taken exception to the gospels as history, are the different accounts of what is reported as actual at the sepulchre; for example:

The answer, in Matthew, given to the women who first visited the sepulchre,—He is not here (chapter xxviii 6), is attributed to one, described (verse 2) as an "angel of the Lord descended from heaven," that "came and rolled back the stone from the door, *and sat upon it.*"

We must naturally suppose, that the angel was seated upon the stone, *outside* of the sepulchre. Here is a definite answer, from a particular person whose position is stated.

In Mark, the language,—He is not here (chapter xvi. 6), is attributed (verse 5) to "a young man sitting on the right side in a long white garment,"—who was seen after "entering the sepulchre."

The women who received the answer from the angel seated upon the stone, as stated in Matthew, are said, in Mark, to have seen "that the stone was rolled away;" but they saw nothing, or say nothing, of an angel seated upon it.

If, now, it was important to show that these accounts differed from each other, a mere reading of them would be held sufficient; but as the wish is to harmonize them, it is urged that the angel seated upon the stone, without the sepulchre, is the same as the young man sitting on the right side, although he does not appear to have been seen, until after the sepulchre was entered.

In Luke, the same answer,—He is not here (chapter xxiv. 6), is attributed (verse 4) to "two men in shining garments;" for we read,—of the women who came to the sepulchre,—that (verse 3), They entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments.

In this account the answer—He is not here,—is attributed to these *two* men; who are described as *standing;* and, as we must suppose, they were within the sepulchre, for they were seen after the sepulchre was entered.

In Matthew, the answer comes from an angel, seated upon the stone which was rolled away from the sepulchre, and was without the sepulchre. In Mark, the removal of the stone is spoken of; but the answer—He is not here,—comes from a young man, *sitting*, in white garments, seen after the sepulchre was entered. In Luke, as we see, two men are described as *standing*, not sitting as in Mark, from whom the answer is received.

Here are many divergencies already; but, in the gospel by John, the story differs from all of the other three accounts.

In John, only one woman, Mary Magdalene, appears to be spoken of as visiting the sepulchre. She "seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre;" but nothing is said of the angel seated upon it. She is not described as having either seen or heard any one: but she "runneth to Simon Peter," and "the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." Mark says (xvi. 8), that the women went out quickly, on discovering that the body was not in the sepulchre, and fled, trembling and amazed, "neither said they any thing to any man, for they were sore afraid." But it may be urged that Mark means to say, that they said nothing to any man—until they came to the two disciples.

John represents that Simon Peter and the other disciple, after being told by Mary Magdalene of the removal of the body, "went forth," &c.

But neither Peter nor any of those with him appear to have seen or heard any one at the sepulchre, though one of them first looked into the sepulchre where he saw only "the linen clothes lying," &c.; then Peter went into the sepulchre, and afterwards the other: but it is not stated that they either saw or heard any one.

We then read that, after the men were gone:

Verse 11. Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre:

And what does she see, according to John? not an angel *seated* upon the stone, as in Matthew; nor a young man *sitting* on the *right side*, as in Mark; nor two men *standing* in shining garments, as in Luke: but she seeth (verse 12) two angels in white *sitting*, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And then, from verse 12, the account is altogether different from any thing to be found in the other gospels; for Mary is reported to have seen Jesus himself, who speaks to her, and she then goes and tells the disciples (verse 18) that she had seen the Lord.

The four accounts differ from each other as to the number and names of the women who visited the sepulchre; and this variation, which we ought not to find, in fact, is urged as an explanation of the other divergencies; but there are two elements in the accounts, binding them together as referring to a common scene, which ought to have been related similarly, if the scene was historical. These two elements are: the common answer, He is not here, reported by Matthew, Mark, and Luke; and, next, that Mary is one of the women, who appear in all of the accounts; no two of which agree in relation to her, whatever may be said of other portions of the story.

We know very well, that the heart is so moved by these accounts, that an examination of them from a critical ground is not only revolting to many, but is said to betray an utter insensibility to the affecting character of the story. But it is not generally a mark of wisdom to yield to the feelings in defiance of the intellect, or continue to dwell in an apparent delusion, because it fosters a morbid exercise of the affectional nature.

We may be sure, on the other hand, that the spiritual reality of this story is infinitely more imposing than any mere historical relation can be, especially when the history removes our conceptions from the present, to a period more than eighteen centuries in the past.

We all see, indeed, externally, that in the midst of life we are in death; but the converse of this may be equally true, that in the midst of death we live forever more,—and yet not because of any past history.

We do not propose to follow up this species of criticism; but must remark that, upon this ground or this mode of examination, dissenters must always have the advantage, which can only be neutralized by feeling, or the logic of the emotions: for, as a question of criticism, the literal sense of the gospels is in opposition to reason throughout, and nothing can be more natural than that there should be infidels to the letter, whenever it is freely approached.

Objections to the letter are so multitudinous that we may observe them at almost every page, and in every variety of form, which escape the observation of most pious readers because it is the habit of their lives to be blind to them.

Casually opening the New Testament, we read of the "joy" in the city of Samaria at the preaching of Philip (Acts viii. 8), and then the story continues:

Verse 9. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

Verse 10. To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

Verse 11. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

Verse 12. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

How many read this account without asking themselves, what must have been the condition of the people who are thus represented as believing in witchcraft and sorcery? And what is the value of the record which describes them as receiving the preaching of Philip and being baptized, when they could be so easily misled by a reputed sorcerer, saying, from the least to the greatest, This man is the great power of GOD? What is the testimony of such people worth in any matter requiring discretion or judgment?

Is it not astonishing that the gospels, so full, as they certainly are, of spiritual beauty, could have been written among such people? Certainly it is, or would be: and this is among the reasons for believing they were written, not by Jerusalem Jews, but by Alexandrian Jews as set forth in Part First of this work.

It gives us no pleasure to point out discrepancies in the gospels. We have only alluded to some few that have been forced upon our attention, and have not gone out of our way in search of them. We notice them thus far only to remark that from the mythical point of view they are of no importance.

The four writers, we say, wrote independently, having regard, not to a history, but to a certain doctrine, the object being to illustrate both the perpetual life of the sacred Law, and the "life everlasting" of those who "abide" in the Law, figured in CHRIST (John xv. 1) as the vine.

I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting (John xii. 49, 50). This is said by the Hebrew sacred Law, personified.

And again: I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely [by the witness of the Spirit] that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me (John xvii. 8).

This is the saying of an Essene teacher who is supposed to have indoctrinated his hearers with the esoteric life of the Law, in the name of which he speaks, by which they realized in themselves the truth of the Law, where the Jew sought "eternal life" (John v. 39).

The same Law, upon condition of obedience, promises life to its followers in the language (John xiv. 19): Because I live, ye shall live also [if ye "abide in me"].

In the exhibition of the closing scene in the four gospels, there are many particulars exceedingly instructive; but not as history.

Let the student bring the subject home as nearly to himself as possible, and seek to discover the truth of the gospels, as the gospel writers themselves discovered the sense of the Law and the Prophets. Let us treat the writers as our friends; they are not strangers to us, unless we choose to make them so, by asserting in them a nature different from our own.

There is, in fact, according to the testimony of both philosophers and divines, but one living truth in the universe.

This One is expressed in all things; but man discovers it in and through himself: and then he understands in what sense it is in the Law; how it comes after the Law; and yet was before the Law.

This One [thing] cannot be put into a writing and carried about in one's pocket. To suppose this possible involves an absurdity, which we must not hesitate to state—the absurdity of imagining that we can carry the everlasting life about us in the form of a paper covered with a few ink marks!

Plato did not think this possible; and this is the reason why, in nearly all of his dialogues, we find a question raised, to which we find no answer—except we discover it ourselves. Plato had a profound reason for leaving many of the problems raised in his dialogues without an answer. He discusses the questions from all points of view, and to careless readers may seem to have answered them; but in fact, he has left the answers for the student to discover himself.

Thus, in Meno the question is: What is virtue? but the answer is not found in the dialogue, and why? because the highest virtue can only be understood from a point of view which explains all the virtues, and sees them all in one, to which we may give a name, indeed, but this is not to make it known.

Again. In Euthydemus the question is, What is prudence; or, wisdom under the name of prudence? Here, as in Meno, we meet with no determinate solution; because, prudence or wisdom, and virtue, are essentially one and the same. It cannot be the part of wisdom to depart from virtue, or of virtue to separate from wisdom. They are one.

Again. In the First Alcibiades, the question is, What is justice? and, as in Meno and Euthydemus, the student is left without an answer; for the design of Plato was, that the student shall see for himself, how, in the highest conception of justice, there is necessarily associated, as in a spiritual family, the very form or Law of virtue and wisdom.

In like manner, though the question in Phileleus is, What is the good? no one can discover what it is, by a mere reading of the dialogue, for the true good lies back, as it were, of all definitions of it; back, in a certain consciousness, where it is seen in the same family with virtue, as already intimated; for there is no true good apart from virtue, nor is there any genuine virtue which does not carry with it its own reward.

In Theætetus, although the question is, What is science, or what is truth, or what is it to know? we do not find the answer in the dialogue. It is only, and that most remotely intimated, Charmides being a discussion upon a similar topic but with no definite result.

The Sophist, the Statesman, and Cratylus should follow Theætetus in the order of being read, and the student will understand them all, when he understands one; but if he looks for a solution in the mere letter of these dialogues he will be disappointed.

And the misunderstood Republic—which has done the reputation of Plato no little damage—what is it?

The Republic of Plato is the one man, the universal man, the grand-man; the One, indeed; the one life, which now is, and was, and shall be forever.

Sir Philip Sidney said there were no writings in the world so well calculated to make a man wise, as those of Plato: and yet this is not because Plato has anywhere defined God, or wisdom, or virtue, or justice, or love, or beauty, or goodness, or truth; for this was not the purpose of his writings: but he has nevertheless written so about all these things, that an attentive student may find something to satisfy his reasonable longings, even though they should reach out after immortality; while the unapt, or careless reader may wonder why so wise a man as Plato has advocated a system in the Republic, which, taken literally, would destroy any society in the world. We ought to see that for this very reason the Republic is a piece of ancient esoteric writing, needing interpretation. If we call the intellectual qualities masculine, and the affectional feminine, we may finally discover in what sense they may live in a blessed *community*, in which, in Scripture language, the lion and the lamb shall lie down together.

Let it be granted that John was a diviner man than Plato; yet it is next to certain, that John had read the Phædrus of the Greek philosopher, and did not disdain to use the principles discussed in that dialogue, in his method of teaching the sacred Law of his own people.

To return now to the question: Why is it that, in the principal dialogues of Plato, questions are raised which are not answered?

Many inquirers into truth have seen very clearly that most, if not all questions, may naturally be divided into two classes: those, the answer to which comes from *without*, and another class whose answer must come from *within*. If any one wishes to know the distance between two geographical places upon the surface of the earth, we know that the answer must come from without; but if any one asks the nature of the good, the just, the beautiful, he will in vain look for an answer from without: he must look within; and if he does not *see* it there, we may be very sure he will not see it anywhere, though he may see, or read, what another has to say about it.

But now, upon this view alone, there is no standard of truth asserted or defined: it is plain, on the contrary, that unless there is still another principle or source of truth, all knowledge must rest in mere empiricism, or be referred to the individual state of the inquirer. This third *something* [?] is a principle of union, by which the two first, or just named sources of knowledge, become harmonized.

This may be compared in some degree to what is familiar to mathematicians who know, from the history of their science, that algebra and geometry grew up independently of each other; but at length the two united into one science under the name of analytical geometry.

A still more remarkable instance may be seen in the unity of the mathematical science, and the grand movements of the heavenly bodies in the solar system.

There is a principle of unity in this, which is not immediately visible in mathematics itself, and still less can it be seen in the external world from any amount of cumulative facts.

Lord Bacon's system of experimental philosophy is no doubt excellent for discovering many of the properties of natural bodies, useful in the arts, &c.; but such a system of discovery would never of itself exhibit the principle of unity, which, nevertheless, is implied or assumed in every experiment. That assumption lies in the conviction of every practical philosopher, that in every experiment, where the elements are the same, the result will be uniformly the same; and thence, it is but a step to say that it must have been so from all time, and must continue to be so for all time. But that which is one and the same for all time, is one of the definitions of Him who inhabiteth eternity.

And now, under this assertion what becomes of the question of miracles? Undoubtedly in a mind, where such definitions take a living form, all belief in them must disappear: and they do so under the same principle by which the philosopher believes it to be the property of fire to burn.

No justice is done to this principle by giving it a popular name, for the moment this is done the free side of the doctrine is lost sight of, in what degenerates into dogmatism. Some see this doctrine exclusively on the side of freedom and refer it to GOD, as if the freedom of GOD could be exercised in an arbitrary manner. GOD'S arbitrary will is the idea many have of freedom: while others, again, conceive the principle under some notion of necessity or fate, and through this idea they deny all freedom in the universe, even to GOD himself. Here are two irreconcilable opposites so long as a certain third view is kept out of sight.

The author must not proceed any further in this direction than to say that nearly all of Plato's writings turn upon this third principle, which he does not directly explain, and yet he is perpetually indicating it in one form or another.

As an example of this, we will recite a portion of the Statesman, where Plato refers to the unalterable, the unchangeable, under the word moderation—as used by the recent English translator.* The apparent object of this dialogue is an inquiry into *human* governments; but the real object is to show that there is a perfect government in the universe [the government of GOD], without which there could be no choice among human governments; for there would be no principle to which a reference might be made for determining why any one government is better than another. He divides human governments into three classes—the kingly, the aristocratic, and the democratic, each of which may be good, so far as it preserves JUSTICE; but, as each may be abused, he divides each into two; and then treats of a tyranny, an oligarchy, and an anarchy. But above all these six governments he places a certain

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* Bohn's Edition, vol. iii., p. 231.

Seventh government, the most "difficult to know;" and by this he means the government of God. But he writes obscurely, because he had an aversion to hemlock.

In the course of this dialogue a discussion is introduced for illustrating the necessity of the *unalterable*, in order to the existence of any art whatever, though Plato applies it more particularly to the art or science of government. We now turn to Plato:

Guest. Let us then, in the first place, look into the whole of *excess* and *deficiency* [here are the two thieves in the allegory], in order that we may praise and blame according to reason whatever is said on each occasion at greater length, or the contrary, than is becoming in disputations of this kind.

Socrates Junior. It will be proper to do so.

Guest. Our discourse taking place on these points, would, I think, take place rightly.

Soc. Jun. About what things?

Guest. About length and shortness, and the whole of excess and deficiency. For the art of measuring [governing] is conversant with all these.

Soc. Jun. It is.

Guest. Let us divide it then into two parts. For it is necessary for that to which we are hastening.

Soc. Jun. Inform me how this division is to be made.

Guest. Thus: One part according to the ideas relating in common to *great* and *little;* but the other part according to the necessary existence of production. [That is, according to an existence necessary for their production.]

Soc. Jun. How say you?

Guest. Does it not appear to you to be according to nature, that we ought to speak of the greater as being greater than nothing else but the lesser? and on the other hand of the lesser, as being lesser than the greater, but nothing else?

Soc. Jun. To me it does.

Guest. But what; must we not say that, whatever surpasses the nature of moderation [and this would be excess], and is surpassed by it [and this would be deficiency], whether in words or actions, is, when produced in reality, that by which the good and bad of us differ the most from each other?

Soc. Jun. It appears so.

Guest. These twofold existences then and judgments respecting the great and the small we must lay down: not, as we just now said, with reference to each other only [that is, the great and the small must not be compared simply or alone with each other]; but, as we now say, we must speak of one [judgment] as growing out of the relation of the great and the small [as compared with each other]; but of another [judgment] as they are referred to *moderation*. Are we however willing to learn on what account this is requisite?

Soc. Jun. How not?

Guest. If any one admits [or asserts] the nature of the greater [to be referable] to nothing but the lesser, it will not then be referable to moderation; will it?

SOC. JUN. No, certainly.

GUEST. Shall we not then destroy the arts themselves, and all their works, according to such reasoning? And shall we not cause to disappear entirely the statesman's science, which we are now investigating, and that which is called the weaving art? For all such things as these guard against that which is *more* or *less* than MODERATION, not as if it had no existence, but as a thing of a difficult nature in practice; and after this manner preserving MODERATION, they effect every thing beautiful and good.

SOC. JUN. How not?

[Here we see the importance of the *middle* principle fully recognized, as there can be no art without it; and the difficulty of discovering it is also stated, with the remark, that when it is observed, or regarded, every thing beautiful and good is produced. This middle principle is the medium or mediator invisibly in the *midst* of all contraries, harmonizing them; but this harmony only becomes truly known when the principle is known. The dialogue proceeds]:

GUEST. If then we cause to disappear the statesman's science [the god-science, by disowning or denying it], will not our subsequent search of king-science [the science of human government] be without a road? [that is, it will be without a principle].

SOC. JUN. Very much so.

[The guest then insists upon the necessity of showing that the more and the less (excess and deficiency) must necessarily be referred, not simply to each other, but to the fixed principle, which he calls *moderation*]. "For no one," says he, "can become indisputably a statesman, or be any person else possessing a knowledge relating to actions, if this be not acknowledged."

Soc. Jun. We ought then to do this even now as much as possible.

[The guest then proceeds to say that it is necessary to pursue the investigation, and adds]:

Guest. But as regards the present question, this reasoning is shown well and sufficiently, it appears to me, to assist us in a conspicuous manner; so that we must think that all arts are to be measured according to something more and at the same less, not only with reference to one another, but to the production likewise of moderation. For when this exists, they exist also; and when they exist, this exists also: but when either of these does not exist neither of those will exist.

This citation may show how Plato suggests the necessary existence of a certain principle, difficult of discovery, but whose existence must be admitted or there can be no art or science whatever.

If any one denies that there is such a principle, then let him consider whether his position does not deny the possibility of truth, by denying a standard for it; while, on the other hand, if he affirms a standard, must not this, from the nature of the case, be antecedent to all writings about it, and be so far independent of the writings as to survive them, if they were destroyed?

By this we may be assured that the standard of truth goes before all writings, accompanies them, and comes or continues after them: and this is the very *formula* required to convert the 1st chapter of John into reality, or an exposition of it, transcending any mere history whatever.

On this question there is no doubt that very many are precisely in the condition of the lunatic described in Matthew xvii. 15, who often fell into the fire, and often into the water.

We cannot look at this story as referring to an actual fact. Who has ever heard of such a case of lunacy? It is a symbolical representation of the case of a man unable to decide between two opinions, one symbolized by water and the other by fire; and Matthew has introduced the story for the purpose of representing the decision as coming from the *mediating* principle, or Spirit, personated in CHRIST.

What is this story of the lunatic worth, if taken literally? It may show us that there was a person who, at a certain time, did a marvellous thing, of the nature of which we have no knowledge; and, so far as it is claimed that this marvellous thing transcended, overruled, or set aside the laws of nature, to that extent it is calculated to destroy our faith in GOD as an immutable Being.

Let us say then, to return to Plato, that a response to a spiritual question, must come from the Spirit; and this is the reason why Plato has raised so many questions in his writings and left them unanswered; for it is a mistake to suppose that he has answered the questions proposed in the minor dialogues, in his great work the Republic, although this has been recently asserted by one of his critics.

The author, however, has no desire to speak of this peculiarity in Plato as an unapproachable mystery, and still less does he wish it supposed that he claims to have had admission, in any exclusive sense, to the Holy of Holies. The author claims no such distinction; but he feels at liberty to suggest that the sense of Plato's writings, nearly all of them, is not on the surface, and needs to be studied out in a spirit, not much unlike that necessary for the comprehension of the still diviner writings, but which are writings nevertheless, and as such must fall under the judgment passed upon all writings at the conclusion of the Phædrus.

SECTION VIII.

We have already had occasion to remark that the Bible is a composite volume. It is made up of many writings expressing, indeed, a common spirit, but yet with peculiarities which make it necessary to look upon its several portions as somewhat distinct from each other.

The Law, we repeat, is the basis of the whole volume. No one of the later books, even to the Revelation in the Isle of Patmos, was written independently of the Law; but notwithstanding this, the several books must be considered, in some sense, independently of each other.

The first three gospels bear visible marks of compilation, and it is difficult to resist the belief that they were all based upon some common original now lost. That common original might be supposed an actual history of "the Man Christ Jesus;" but the several portions of the gospels, in the form in which we now have them, utterly exclude the notion of an actual history.

No consecutive order of events is observed. The teachings found together in one, are scattered in others. The parables and miracles are distributed without any regard to historic order, John giving no account of the parables, and recording but a few of the miracles, the miracle of the raising of Lazarus in John not being noticed by either of the other three Evangelists.

The draught of fishes is recorded by two of the Evangelists only, Luke and John; but while Luke represents the miraculous draught as having been made in an early period of the ministry, almost the very commencement of it, John records it as having taken place after the resurrection.

The usual answer to this is, that there were two draughts of fishes, one recorded by Luke and the other by John. But how then does it happen that there were so many circumstances in common between the two? In both cases the fishermen toiled all night, taking nothing: they hesitated in both cases to renew their efforts; but finally consented and were successful. This is symbolism. To fish in the great deep [of truth] except upon the suggestion of the Spirit of Truth, must always be a "toil" without results. This is to fish during the "night" of ignorance; but to seek the truth in the Spirit of Truth is always crowned with a blessing.

The Bible is considered in the Christian world from so many points of view, or is seen under so many phases, that it is difficult to speak of them in a few words.

Many Christians believe the entire volume was given by what is called plenary inspiration, from Genesis to Revelation inclusive; and some suppose it has been protected, even from grammatical errors, from the earliest ages to the present time. Among those who thus regard the sacred volume, provision is made, nevertheless, for a certain advance or fulfilment of the earlier Scriptures, the Law itself being prophetic of one who was to come, and who came, as they say, in Jesus Christ.

At this point may be considered as commencing the most distinct controversy. One class of the Jews looked upon the promise of the coming one, as pointing to a temporal king, to reign in Jerusalem. Another class interpreted this promise as referring to a certain invisible Holy One of Israel, the principle of life and truth; the Father of the Law which, in the latter days, was to be written upon the heart.

This allusion to what is called the *latter days*, which has occasioned no little trouble in the world, had no reference whatever to the end of the world, but was simply a mode of expressing an opinion that man, as he advances in years and experience, towards *his* latter days, usually finds the principles of the written Law in his heart, in the knowledge of which he may become wise according to the spirit, and not merely according to the Letter. There is much reason to believe that some of the Apostles themselves were deceived on this very point, by trusting too much to the Letter, and really thought that the world itself was coming to an end within the "generation" in which they lived. But this did not prevent their writing histories of the life-principle personified, which came, subsequently, to be regarded as real by those who lost the secret; and the followers of this view were finally called Christians; who believe that the predictions in the older writings were fulfilled in Christ; while the Jews, denying this, still expect the coming of a visible king to reign over them, "of whose government there shall be no end."

The divisions and subdivisions among Christians themselves are innumerable, although in many instances they divide off on minor points, about which, as among each other, they contend with great violence; but when in contest with their opponents, the class they call infidels, they generally deny that the differences in the Church are of any importance, and claim that in all essential points of doctrine there is but one faith in Christendom.

But if any one is really anxious to know the faith of Christendom, and looks inquiringly into the Christian world for satisfaction, he will have as many answers as there are sects in Christendom. There is no agreement in any one tenet, the moment an explanation of the tenet begins to be made. Thus, although all Christians believe in God, he is believed in differently, not only by Unitarians and Trinitarians, but in each of these sects opinions run off into wide differences.

Of the second person of the God-head, as Christ is called, opinions vary in all conceivable degrees, from the notion of a divine humanity to that of a human divinity. There is so much contention as to the second person, that the character of the third is partially lost sight of, though there are many and wide differences of opinion as to the Holy Spirit.

Then come an endless series of subordinate controversies, from that about the meaning of a word, to that of the whole Bible; insomuch, that it would seem that God himself is far less in need of a revelation, than the book which professes to reveal the Father. The various controversies may be considered as labelled by the names of the several Christian denominations in the world.

We see first the separation of a moiety of the Christian world from the ancient Church; and then distinctions appear among the former under the names of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, with subdivisions within most of these into high and low, new and old, &c., all of them leaving unanswered the questions about law and grace, necessity and free-will, and a multitude of other points, which one might suppose a supernatural revelation had put to rest.

The author of this work has come to the conclusion that one opinion more can add nothing to the confusion universally prevailing in the world on this subject, and he has therefore published a method of looking at the gospels which has removed from his own mind more difficulties than any other that has come to his knowledge.

We may look at the whole Bible as the Essenes looked at the Law, or the Scriptures antecedent to their time. As such, it is an expression of divine truth, which must be considered as twofold, Letter and Spirit. The Letter is still the Baptist and the Spirit is still Christ. The Letter still testifies of something which it is not itself; for no man sees the Spirit of Truth, as contained in any one particular text of Scripture, nor in any particular portion of Scripture, nor even in the whole of the Scriptures together,—so long as they are looked upon as authoritatively disposing of the question of grace.

But in expressing this general opinion, we must record a belief that a faithful student may catch its spirit from many parts of it; and further still, it must be admitted, that many really possess the Spirit of the Bible, who have not received it from the Bible itself; nor do they even see it there, because the Bible has been misrepresented to them, and they do not look for it there.

This will not be a mystery to those who understand the true independence of the Spirit, and that it "was" before the Bible, though it may come after it to the phenomenal man.

The gospels are outgrowths of the Hebrew Sacred Law, as conceived by the Essene society, of whose actuality we have a positive history in both Philo and Josephus: and the principal object was, to exhibit, in a mythical form, the pattern of a perfect life, a righteous death (or the death of the righteous), and, finally, to exhibit the doctrine of the resurrection.

The elements of the opinion here expressed may be seen, first, in the fact, that the Hebrew Sacred Law, however it originated,—the question of its origin not being discussed,—was actually received among the Jews, as a God-given Law.

This Law was the basis of the subsequent writings, including those of the prophetic teachers, all of whom appeal to the Law of the Lord, and build upon it, though in figurative and symbolical language.

Somewhere in the progress of the nation, or people of the Jews—it is unnecessary to determine the precise historical period—a certain society existed among the Jews, within which, as a sacred secret, the opinion was held, that the books regarded as holy by the Jews, carried with them two faces, as it were—an inward and an outward face—expressed in the language, that they were written "within and without." The writings were said to have an inward and an outward sense, the last being their literal sense, which was addressed to the comprehension of those who judged of things chiefly by their senses; while the inward sense was addressed to the higher nature of man, and came to light in those who were carried to the Law by the Spirit in which the Law itself had been written.

Several of the doctrines of the Church may now be easily defined.

The Trinity is: 1st. The Spirit in which the Law was conceived and written. This is the Father.

2d. The Law itself: and this is the Son; called the Son of God, as having proceeded from the Spirit of

Truth—itself considered the Spirit of GOD: for GOD is truth, in the same sense that he is love.

In the 3d place, the Law is supposed to communicate its Spirit to its faithful followers; that is, to those who obey the Law, called "doing the will of the Father," which is expressed in the Law: and this is the Holy Spirit, one with the Father.

Here we see the Law as the Mediator between its Spirit, as from the Father, and Man, to whom the Spirit is communicated; and this is what gives to the Law the character of a Saviour, from generation to generation, as Isaiah expresses it.

We may now clearly understand why CHRIST, speaking in the name of the Law, says, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father, but by me (John xiv. 6); the meaning being, that obedience to the Law is the way to the Spirit, the Father of the Law—the "Word" being Truth (John xvii. 17); and the Word being the Law, which is said to be "the truth" (Ps. cxix. 142).

But now, while we see here that no man cometh to the Father but by CHRIST (as the Law), we read, that no man can come to CHRIST, that is, to the Law, except the Father draw him (John vi. 44); the meaning of which is, that no one will yield his life-habits to the requirements of the Law, unless drawn thereto by a certain Spirit of Truth in sympathy or affinity with that expressed in the Law itself: and this is called being drawn by the Father.

Here we see also why faith in CHRIST is so strongly insisted upon. We read that CHRIST could do no "mighty works" in a certain place "because of their unbelief;" and this, rightly understood, explains the meaning of the tenet just recited; for, without a belief in the Law, the Law is inoperative: it does not take hold of an unbeliever, and works no moral or spiritual effects upon him.

Belief and faith, however, are distinguished from each other as the Letter and the Spirit are distinguished. Belief rests upon external evidence, and lives in the water-baptism: but faith is directed to the Spirit of Truth itself, and is the very life and spirit of works.

The difference is the same as that between doing what is right because it is written, which is the water-baptism; and seeing the Truth of what is written, by the Spirit of what is written, called the witness of the Spirit.

All of the gospel writers regarded the light, or truth, or life of the Law, as the gift of GOD, and not as the gift of man in any sense whatever, much less the gift of a writing; while yet the Law, as a writing, was considered also as the gift of GOD, and as a witness or testimony of the Spirit that gave it.

To enter upon this truth was to be "born again," in the language of CHRIST to Nicodemus: it was to be born of water *and* the Spirit; these being among the figurative words by which the Law was indicated, as having an outward and an inward sense.

The representation of the life, death, and resurrection of the Law, in the hands of the Essenes, was, as we have said, symbolical of that of man; and its mythical exhibition in the person of Jesus is the image of a doctrine which can never be lost out of the world: because it figures a truth whose actuality is independent of all writings whatsoever, to which the Scriptures themselves owe both their existence and their authority.

The gospels, in this view, are not histories, as we have occasion constantly to repeat. They are mythical exhibitions of the doctrine of the Essenes; and although there is a general likeness or similitude in the four accounts, this is not to be attributed to an outward reality, or veritable history, but to a common understanding among intimate associates, who spake "openly" of all things among each other; but to the "people," or those "without," meaning those *without the society*, they spake and wrote only in parables.

It would be strange if portions of the gospels did not present difficulties in view of the theory advanced in this work. The difficulties grow in part out of the nature of the subject, and in part out of the manner of writing about it. But no difficulty occurs to the author, as an objection to his hypothesis, which does not bear with equal or greater force upon the commonly received opinions on this subject.

The one, two, or three natures of Christ, as usually understood, or rather discussed in the Church without being understood, present difficulties as inexplicable as any that ever came under human examination. This, indeed, is generally admitted in the Church itself;

where doctrines are often declared to be inaccessible to human reason, and under the name of mysteries, are protected, or sought to be protected against the inroads of criticism; and an equally mysterious doctrine of faith is urged, to make way for tenets which are to be implicitly received, whatever human reason may say to the contrary; while yet, the tenets themselves are not agreed upon.

Those who advocate this extreme position are hardly authorized to object to a system, simply because some difficulties may remain unexplained by it. It is true that no system can be acceptable which involves in itself inconsistencies, contradictions, and impossibilities. This is precisely the reason why the commonly received interpretations of Scripture need revision. They present inconsistencies, contradictions, and impossibilities, when approached by natural reason; and the defence set up for this in the Church, is not such as enables any one to give "a reason for the faith that is in him;" but it is with many a denial of the right to reason about what are openly called mysteries. We say therefore that those who take this position are not entitled to object to another view, on the ground simply that some things may remain unexplained; for their own system is confessedly without explanation.

The greatest difficulty in the Church is undoubtedly as to the nature of the second person of the Trinity.

Is CHRIST GOD or man; the Son of GOD or the Son of man: or is he neither; but, a mysterious being of a middle nature, empowered or sent by GOD to declare or make known GOD'S will?

We say, in answer to these questions, that JESUS CHRIST, so far as historically recognized, was a minister to the circumcision (Rom. xv. 8); that is, a minister to the Jews: and that his office or mission is distinctly alluded to in John i. 17, where we read that, The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST: the meaning of which is, that JESUS CHRIST brought to light, or explained the esoteric sense of the Law,—its grace and truth.

JESUS CHRIST did not come to do away the Law, "not one jot or tittle of which was to fail." He came not to destroy but to fulfill (Matt. v. 18). "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fail" (Luke xvi. 17).

As a person, JESUS CHRIST explained the inner sense of the Law; but he explained it to the members of a secret society, among whom were found those who followed his lead and wrote esoteric expositions of the Law, in which JESUS CHRIST appears as the representative of the Spirit he taught, the Spirit of the Law, which is called in the parable of the Sower, in Matthew, the Word of the kingdom; in Mark, simply the Word—as in the 1st verse of John—while Luke calls it the Word of GOD; and certainly all four mean the mysterious Law of Moses, where the Jews saw a doctrine of *Life.*

The modern Christian, who finds his religion chiefly in the New Testament, can hardly realize what a Jew saw in the Law, because he rarely makes the Law a study; very many who call themselves Christians scarcely giving it an attentive reading.

The Law was not seen simply in the Decalogue, but in the entire ceremonial prescribed in the Pentateuch, in every part of which the Jew saw some allusion to life, binding upon his conscience. To the Pharisee all, or the most of this, was taken literally; but JESUS CHRIST brought to light its inner sense, and explained the real meaning to a secret society, the members of which had many books, the object of which was to bring into action, among the members of the society, a certain Spirit of Truth, rectitude or righteousness, in the light of which the intelligent Jew came into a position which freed him from the burdensome performance of the outward ceremonies, whose original object was to induce or excite that Spirit of Truth.

That Spirit is invisible; and the members of the society personified it for the convenience of teaching, and they gave to it the name of CHRIST, because CHRIST had been preëminently animated by it.

JESUS CHRIST, although a real person, was not precisely such a person as is described in the gospels, where he is a personification, brought forward as a medium of instruction in the Law. He figures the Law, no otherwise than as *Wisdom* figures the same Law in several portions of the older writings, particularly in the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, which contains several of the most important elements of the teaching in the gospel of John. Some of the passages in Ecclesiasticus are so strikingly similar to those in John, that some critics have urged the probability that the Apocryphal book, by the son of Sirach, was written subsequently to that of the gospel—though similar reasoning ought to compel a change of the common opinion as to the date of Daniel in old canon.

We repeat, therefore, that Jesus Christ, as he appears in the gospels, whatever might have been his real history, is a personification; and he represents the Law of Moses, figured as a person, a man, as having a body and soul; the visible Letter representing the former, but the invisible sense the latter,—this being the light or life of the Word—the Word of God—the Law of Moses.

This Law, regarded in its Spirit, is referred to God, and is thence called the Son of God; but when seen in the Letter, it is the Son of man: and as the Law contained the doctrine of life, its representative came to be considered the Mediator between God and man; because the Law, by its rules of right living, was supposed to bring its follower to the knowledge of the Spirit of the Law, and thence into unity with the Father, through or by means of a unity with the Law in its Spirit.

As the Law is the Mediator, from this point of view, between God and man; so, in a similar manner, as the Law contains the rules for right living, designed to protect or save man from the evils of the world, its representative came to be considered the Saviour.

Christ says, speaking in the name of the Law:

For the Son of man is come to save that which is lost (Matt. xviii. 11); and again, For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them (Luke ix. 56); again, For GOD sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (John iii. 17). In the same sense we read, I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness (John xii. 46). This *light* is the light, or truth of the Word, and the Word is the Law of Moses. Personified as Wisdom in Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 27, it is said of it,—He maketh the doctrine of knowledge [that is, the Law] appear as the light, and as Geon in the time of vintage. This is the very same light to which the Baptist is said to testify. The true Spirit, being in the soul, makes the doctrine of the Law appear as the Light, by seeing itself in the Law; which is thence said to give the same Light.

We read also: If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world (John xii. 47). Here we have full liberty to disbelieve in the words of CHRIST, without incurring the danger of a judgment on that account from him as a person. But this is not the meaning: the meaning is, that the Law, as such, does not condemn any one who does not recognize its divine teaching, this being immediately explained in the next verse, where we read that, Whoever rejecteth the Law hath one that judgeth him,—meaning the Spirit of Truth, the judge of all mankind.

It is the Law, also, that came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matt. ix. 13); St. Paul, in the same sense, saying, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient (1 Tim. i. 9).

If we say that Christ, as a person, called sinners to repentance,—he did so as a minister, teaching the Spirit of the Law. So Wisdom is represented as "crying without, and uttering her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying," &c. In the gospels, this same Wisdom is personified as speaking in Christ.

The prophets for the most part speak in the name of the Law, as if the Law lived in them and empowered them to speak. When they use the language, as they often do—The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—they mean, the Spirit of the Law; and then they often declare the power and purpose of the Law, or its mission. The Law was the "anointed" One, *sent* to preach good tidings unto the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives [to sin], and the opening of the prison to them that are bound [in chains of ignorance]. The Law was *sent* to comfort those that mourn, &c., on the simple condition of their turning to the Law, which was called *turning* to the Lord.

The only *captives* that were intended to be liberated by either the Law or the gospel, were those in captivity to sin and ignorance; and these were figured by *leprosy* and *blindness.* Hence the *parables* representing the cure of lepers and the restoration of sight to the blind; and these wonders were supposed to be accomplished by the Law. Whatever evil there may be in political bondage or slavery, it is certain that, from the Christian point of view, it is possible that a slave may be more morally free than his master, and by so much nearer the Christian heaven. It is gross ignorance of the Law and the Prophets to interpret Isaiah lviii. 6, in any other sense than as a command to loose the *bands* of *wickedness,* to undo the heavy burdens [of wickedness], and to let the oppressed [by sin] go free, and that ye break every [immoral and unspiritual] yoke.

The author has been told that his view is at best but half true; that it is altogether subjective and totally ignores the objective. But this comes from not recognizing the true objective in Christianity, imagining it to be a mere history of a few outward events recorded in the gospels. But, according to John, the gospel has preserved but a very small fragment of the works "done" by Christ, the which, if they should be written every one, we are told, that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written (John xxi. 25).

What does this plainly signify but that the real life of Christ, as objectively exhibited, would be a history of the world, of which he is the Life?

It is no denial of God to say that he cannot have a local history assigned to a particular period of the world's progress, and limited to a defined geographical space. Those who suppose this possible, do not perceive that their view is incompatible with any just notion of God. They do not see that in giving God a special history, limited to time and space, they make him a finite being and deny all of the attributes usually referred to him as expressing his infinite nature.

The Greek philosophers saw this very plainly, and guarded against being misapprehended by making double affirmations in referring to God; thus, when they said that God is everywhere, they added, to prevent the supposition of a finite being, that he was nowhere, meaning, nowhere in any exclusive sense. But Christians do not seem to recognize the reverence in this, and think it no disparagement to the idea of God to speak of the omnipresent Being in the past tense, as if there was a period in the history of the world when God in Christ had a local history!

The author's objection to this is not founded upon historical criticism. It lies in the very conception of God antecedent to all history, and which no history whatever can have any effect to remove. He can only conceive of God as *especially* in the past, by losing him from the present; and this would be to lose him altogether.

The author, however, is perfectly aware that statements of this kind express nothing but individual convictions, resting altogether upon the idea of the divine nature, and he has no disposition to press them upon others. He has seen how philosophers have frequently been misled into systems built upon some mere assumption or postulate, to have any wish to follow in that direction. One, and a great man in other respects, defines God to be perfection; and fails to see that, through such a definition, he can have no idea of God but his own idea of perfection. Upon this idea he begins to reason, and denies either increase or decrease to God, because his idea of perfection admits of neither. By such reasoning no one can ever pass beyond the trammels of a form of words which assumes to enclose an idea of God, who is thus, in fact, denied his divinity, by being made amenable to the powers of human language.

But this difficulty does not deny to us the propriety or the necessity of adjusting our views of nature to the positive requirement of the intellect, which is so constituted, that what appears to it as contradictions are met with a certain repugnance, which the intellect accepts as a fact, expressing its own nature, and by implication the higher nature also, though not in a comprehensive or final sense.

At the commencement of this work, the author proposed only to exhibit what has seemed to him an explanation of the place of the gospels, in their relation to the older Scriptures. There has been no design from the first to explain universal nature. On the contrary, the author declared his opinion explicitly that nature, in itself, cannot be explained: and he defined his understanding of what is meant by explaining any thing, to be this only: that we find a place for the thing in what we know of the order of events in nature; not that we can explain or understand nature itself, otherwise than as we refer it to GOD.

This opinion is reasserted here, in order to guard against the supposition, on the part of any one, that this work has fallen short of its purpose, on the ground that the reader cannot find here an answer to questions upon points of divinity or philosophy which the author did not propose to answer.

In this inquiry it has been assumed that the Old Testament, but more especially the Law, or Pentateuch, was in existence and was received as divine, or as of divine authority, among the Jews, prior to the introduction of the gospels; and his object has been to show that the gospels are not, in a supernatural sense, a new revelation, but a natural though somewhat mysterious outgrowth of the prior Scriptures.

For this purpose it has not been necessary, nor has it been any part of the design of the author to write a treatise upon what may be called *origins*,—either of nature or of man, or even of the Mosaic books, about which scholars have employed themselves in all ages.

Yet it would seem as if every student is obliged to enter the field of metaphysics to some extent, if for no other purpose than to clear up his own ideas upon the topics usually considered purely speculative.

This is necessary in part as a protection against coming under the delusions of others, and also for the purpose of practically discovering the value of speculative inquiries, by disclosing in one's self the nature and powers of the instruments or faculties employed in such inquiries. This is perhaps the best, if not the only method of enabling any one to determine how far theory may be employed in putting a limit upon investigations in nature; or, which may come to the same thing, how far nature puts a limit upon the employment of theory itself.

It is generally known by practical students, that the intellect has a certain self-evolving power, the exercise of which does not explain nature, but may nevertheless explain, by actual experience, or trial, the power of the intellect itself, and show wherein it is limited,—thus becoming a protection against its own extravagance.

It has been long since decided that the mere exercise of the intellect cannot practically explain nature, while, on the other hand, it is equally certain that no amount of external observations ever furnishes the true key for their own explanation.

Here, under the words theory and practice, we meet once more with old friends under new names; for we may regard the Bible in its Letter as so much *practice;* but the principle for its explanation must be the gift of CHRIST, the Spirit of Truth.

If we could all, and always, remain in childhood and never pass into a state when the questions, "whence and whither," arise, we might be able to stand upon the traditions of the past without submitting them to a critical examination. But this is not the privilege of man. He must pass forward in years, if not in wisdom; and many, if not the most of us, are compelled, sooner or later, to be confronted in some form or other with the problem of life, and must receive the warning, as if addressed to each one of us—Physician, heal thyself. Yet, let us not mistake this proverb as implying an independent power in man to save himself. This, as a phenomenal being, he cannot do; but, for this very reason, he may feel how impossible it is to accept as of unquestionable authority what he recognizes as the work of other men, unless he feels called upon, to acknowledge its recognition of the independence of the Spirit. The wind bloweth as it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. The author of this declaration could never have intended to put chains upon the Spirit by the Letter.

Here it is, as we believe, man may understand that, in the great work of redemption, no writing in the world can be any thing but an instrument. As such, we look upon the Hebrew Sacred Law: a wonderful work, which has exercised an influence in the world second only to the Hindoo VEDAS. A third work, of vast influence also, is of a date more recent by several hundred years than the latest contributions to the volume we call the Bible, the Book,—the Book of the LORD. All of these books had and have but one design, that of bringing Man into harmony with his Maker, or of keeping him so. But as, in this work, Man is obliged, in some sense, to be a co-worker with God, and yet recognize the whole work as God's, most attempts to afford aid from man have been so conceived and written, as to leave the true freedom of man unshackled and unimpaired.

This is the reason, or a principal reason, why the Bible was written in symbolism; and, in former ages, the attempts to interpret the symbolism were symbolical also.

In this style the gospels were written: and if we can begin to understand these mysterious books by referring them back to the older Scriptures, we may consider that we have made some progress in understanding the older writings also, the maxim becoming then applicable to us,—Whosoever hath [some knowledge of the Scriptures], to him shall be given; and he shall have more abundance.

But in every case, and under all circumstances, the student is doubly warned, to REMEMBER the word that I said unto you, The servant [the Letter] is not greater than his lord. He should therefore seek the Spirit, as a faithful disciple of the Truth. But he may take to himself as an encouragement, the assurance that, whilst the disciple is not above his master, every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

THE END.

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